THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9 September, 1927 Number 9

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

WAR PREPARATION AND THE T.U.C.
CLEMENS DUTT

The Paris Congress of the I.F.T.U.
HARRY POLLITT

The Economic Progress of the U.S.S.R.
MAURICE DOBB

British War Preparations in India
A. N. BHADURI

Wages and Working Conditions in China
EARL BROWDER

The Most Urgent Tasks of our Movement
N. LENIN

The World of Labour Book Review

Published at
162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD, LONDON, S.W.1

PRICE SIXPENCE

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WELL WRITTEN

THE
Paper for Trade Unionists

WELL READ

THE WORKER

Keep up-to-date with

MINORITY MOVEMENT

PROGRESS

Every Thursday :: :: One Penny

RAPID SALES

376
Gray's Inn Road,
W.C.1

RISING CIRCULATION

THE
PLEBS

SEPTEMBER *FOURPENCE*

The JULY EVENTS IN VIENNA AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE
By ZED.

SOCIALISM AND WORLD PEASANT PROBLEMS
By H.C.S.

A WORD FOR ESPERANTO
By PROF. W. COLLINSON.

PAVLOV'S STUDY OF "CONDITIONED REFLEXES"

THE N.C.L.C. TRAINING CENTRE
By F. J. ADKINS.

Published at
162a Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1

IMPERIALISM

A new Labour Research Department Syllabus

By EMILE BURNS

6d., postage 1d.

Per dozen, 5s., post free.

LABOUR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 9 SEPTEMBER, 1927 NUMBER 9

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

CONTENTS

WAR PREPARATION AND THE T.U.C. - - Page 515
By CLEMENS DUTT

The Paris Congress of the I.F.T.U. - - „ 524
By HARRY POLLITT

The Economic Progress of the U.S.S.R. - „ 528
By MAURICE DOBB

British War Preparations in India - - „ 537
By A. N. BHADURI

Wages and Working Conditions in China - „ 546
By EARL BROWDER

The Most Urgent Tasks of our Movement - „ 556
By N. LENIN

Capitalism and the Novel - - - - - „ 562
By MANUEL LOPEZ

The World of Labour - - - - - „ 567
Anglo-Russian Unity

Book Review - - - - - - - „ 573
Class Collaboration in America

Published at
162 Buckingham Palace Road
London
S.W.1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : SLOANE 5412.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

1927 : Reduced Subscription Rates

[PAID IN ADVANCE]

British Isles :

One year - 7/- Six months - 3/6

Abroad :

One year 8/- or $2.00 Six months 4/- or $1.00

American Subscription Representative :—Philip Novick, 280 Broadway, Room 331, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

Advertisement Rates on application

Volume VIII (January to December, 1926) is now ready and can be supplied for 10s. 6d. post free or these numbers can be bound and returned post free for 4s. 6d.

Title Page for Volume VIII can be had on application if 1½d. for postage is sent.

Complete sets of Bound Volumes can now only be supplied in exchange for unbound copies.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WAR PREPARATION AND THE T.U.C.

[*The "Notes of the Month," by R.P.D., interrupted at present, will be resumed in a later issue. This article appears in their place.*]

The New Period

THE central fact of the present period is the attack on the U.S.S.R. All the other issues are overshadowed by this or are bound up with it. The onslaught of capitalist reaction has proceeded on three fronts. The first to develop was the attack on the workers at home. The next stage of action came with the attack against the Chinese revolution and preparation for the attack against the U.S.S.R. The way is now open for the period of direct attack against the Soviet Union, and the attempt to destroy the central stronghold of the revolutionary workers. In the now far-off period of democratic pacifist illusions all these developments appeared a very remote possibility. When the Conservative Government came into power there were many who did not even believe in the coming onslaught on the working class at home. The official movement welcomed the smoke-screen of industrial peace talk as if it was a new atmosphere of goodwill. Even when the real character of capitalist reaction at home could no longer be denied, it was still believed that capitalism was sincerely striving for international peace. The Locarno policy was represented in the most rosy colours. Only now is the full strategy of British capitalism open and undeniable. The whole drive of its foreign policy is towards war with Russia, and a new world war of imperialism. The working class is faced with the certainty of struggles, both at home and abroad, on a scale greater than anything that has yet taken place. The onslaught on the working class at home, the effort to wreck for ever its powers of resistance, takes its place as only one aspect of capitalist policy, an essential but subordinate part of the preparation for war.

War Draws Near

The new period into which we have now entered opened with the armed offensive against China. The diplomatic break with

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Russia immediately followed, and, with the evidence of the daily fomentation of the war atmosphere, it has been shown that this cannot be regarded as anything other than the prelude to new hostilities. It is true that even before the events of this year it would have been absurd to talk of a reign of world peace. Apart from diplomatic intrigue and manoeuvring and preparation for war, there have been plenty of examples of small-scale wars since the Treaty of Versailles was drawn up. But the war with China is of a special type and with a special significance. It is a war conducted by the big imperialist powers, by direct and indirect means, against the greatest area and greatest population of Asia. Further, unlike the preceding small wars, it is not a war between two bourgeois powers, but a real class war waged by the forces of world imperialism, headed by British imperialism, against a national revolutionary movement which is the immediate ally of the international working class. If the attack on the Chinese revolution had been prevented it would have meant, not only a check to the immediate attack of capitalism at home, but also the gaining of a new ally for the working class of the utmost significance for the future development of the whole of Asia, and for the struggle with capitalism throughout the world. The unimpeded progress of the capitalist attack in China means the desertion of this ally, and leaves the way open for more thorough-going reaction at home, and for a further development of the capitalist offensive abroad. Thus, the attack on China is seen to be the key to the new period of war.

The idea of war is no longer one of a far-off menace, but has become an immediate present issue. War preparations are no longer hidden or glossed over, they are obvious, unconcealed and even flaunted with all the publicity that the Press can give. The underlying preparations are for a new imperialist war, the immediate objective is war against the Soviet Union. The time is nearly ripe for actual outbreak of the latter ; as in the case of the preliminary diplomatic rupture, the exact moment of the offensive is only delayed until the most favourable opportunity is found. The bloc of the European States is nearly ready, the League of Nations is guaranteed as a tool, and the military preparations are practically complete. The visits of Sir Samuel Hoare to the Balkans and of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sir Worthington Evans to the Afghan frontier, are only minor, though unmistakable, evidences of the plan of operations. The preparations in India and in the Near East are the greatest of all. Preliminary steps in the war against Russia may consist in an attack on Afghanistan, or through Persia or Mesopotamia, and consequently it becomes as vital for the working class to prevent these as to prevent a direct offensive against the U.S.S.R.

In the face of the war intentions of imperialism which now stand revealed, what becomes of the reformist hopes of preventing war by pacifist propaganda, international arbitration, the League of Nations and disarmament? It stands exposed as illusion and deceit, which plays the same rôle of preventing the action of the workers against war as did surrender to the hypocrisy of President Wilson in the last imperialist war. The very reformists who wish to concentrate all attention on these panaceas are the most entangled in the militarism and war-preparations of their own Governments. Who can believe that the leading socialists of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, such as Paul Boncour, the author of the Mobilisation Order in France, or MacDonald, the servant of the British Foreign Office; or Jouhaux, the bitter opponent of Soviet Russia; or Vandervelde, foreign minister in a capitalist government; or Breitscheidt, who agrees to military intervention against "red imperialism"; or any of them, will ever do anything but follow in the wake of the capitalists of their own country. No wonder that the *New Statesman* remarks, with regard to the rather "excessive programme of naval construction" of the Conservative Government, that "nevertheless, it is important that it should be understood that the attitude of a Labour or Liberal government would be substantially the same."

The Geneva Disarmament Conference

Among the revealing portents of the coming war situation, the breakdown of the Geneva Disarmament Conference takes an important place. The significance of the breakdown does not lie merely in the failure to limit the piling up of armaments, for all the previous efforts in this direction have also proved of no account. Thus the provisions of the Washington Conference of 1921 are already largely a dead letter, the Coolidge disarmament proposal

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

came to nothing, and the League of Nations Commission on Disarmament in March of this year broke up without achieving any result. What the Geneva failure does is to bring the existence of the fundamental Anglo-American antagonism into the open. The existence of this basic imperialist antagonism is none the less real, because it has not hitherto been expressed in a form of acute conflict, but has rather been hidden under the form of co-operation as was evident at the Washington Conference. In the same way, another fundamental antagonism, that between the U.S.S.R. and the rest of the capitalist world, remained apparently dormant while minor antagonisms, such as that expressed in the Ruhr conflict in Europe, were passing through an acute phase. Even at Washington the underlying Anglo-American antagonism really dominated the situation and determined, for instance, the open abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. The failure of Geneva means the break-down of the co-operation screen just where it was most desired to preserve it, viz., in regard to military calculations and preparations for the next war.

The whole of the capitalist Press, in order to mask the real situation, has taken the line that the difference that arose at Geneva was only due to the different points of view with regard to strategical requirements, that it was really an unnecessary difference and chiefly to be deplored because of its possibly unfortunate effect on the good relations between the two countries. Actually, the exact reverse is the case ; the conflict over strategy arose as the result of the rapid development of the underlying economic political antagonism between British and American imperialism. The financial struggle, the war for markets, &c., is only now beginning to develop into a real conflict for supremacy. The competition of the U.S.A. is only now beginning to be seriously felt by the British Empire in the export markets of the world. The Dominions, especially Canada and Australia, are drawn into the conflict along with Britain and already, therefore, the full calculations for a possible war have to be made by British capitalism.

The decline of British capitalism forces it to take up an aggressive rôle in order to maintain its position. Thus, with the economic and trade preponderance passing into the hands of the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

U.S.A., Britain was forced at Geneva to appear as the aggressor in refusing a limitation of armaments. Also she is compelled to seek allies, and this explains why the third great power, Japan, at Geneva was to be seen putting forward compromise proposals which give a greater tonnage to Great Britain than to the U.S.A. America scored at Washington in 1921 by securing the cancellation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. It is doubtful whether it was ever really thrown overboard, and at Geneva the occasion was taken openly to resuscitate it and thus to repudiate the Washington decisions.

The sharpening of Anglo-American antagonism has its effect also on the British conflict with the U.S.S.R. There are some signs of approaches to the Soviet Union on the part of U.S.A. capitalism since the British rupture of relations. The latest expression of Anglo-American oil rivalry has arisen over the purchase of Russian oil by the Standard Oil Company of New York and the Vacuum Oil Company. Ivy Lee, described as public relations counsel for these two American companies, has recently written a book advocating investment of capital in Russia, suggesting the formation of a Russian Bureau for promoting trade with the U.S.S.R. The American approach to the U.S.S.R., in part, at least, a move directed against Britain, makes the task of British capitalism more difficult and complicated.

War and the Workers' Struggle

The intimate relation between the working class fight against capitalist reaction at home, and the fight against the war menace has already been indicated. It is useless to hope for peace based on pacifist propaganda or on arrangements made by the imperialists among themselves. Imperialism itself involves war, and, therefore, the struggle against war is not different from the struggle against capitalism. The attack on the working class at home is part of the preparation for war and it must be defeated if war is to be prevented. Any slackening of resistance brings in its train an immediate further development of the attack. If the working class is defeated in Britain, it means a further extension of the war front, and sharpening of war preparations abroad; if the opposition to imperialism breaks down abroad, as by the check to the Chinese revolution, or the defeat of the national-revolutionary movements

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the colonies, then further development of the capitalist offensive in Britain is inevitable. Therefore, the war preparations of British imperialism must be fought in the same way as the capitalist reaction, by the mass struggle of the working class in alliance with the mass revolt against imperialism on the part of the colonial peoples.

The immediate and central issue in the struggle at home is the Trade Union Act. The struggle here in itself expresses and sums up all the other issues, it includes the war issue, as also all the home issues, because it involves the very existence of independent trade unionism. It is, therefore, a totally wrong view to look upon it merely as "the Blacklegs' Charter." This epithet reveals the pitifully narrow and limited view of its users. As if the Act was only to facilitate strike-breaking ! The question involved in the Act is the whole question of the existence of the trade union movement as the organ of the workers. It is a consciously designed scheme to block all revolutionary development, to paralyse working-class action in the coming crisis, and to convert the trade unions into subordinate government institutions. The challenge is immediate. The application of the Act is not at some future time but now, in the crisis actually at hand. It is idle, therefore, to talk of a hypothetical repeal in future by a hypothetical future Labour Government. The Act must be fought now, anything else is equivalent to an acceptance, and means an assent to the liquidation of trade unionism. That is the chief issue and task of the forthcoming Trades Union Congress at Edinburgh. That Congress will have to determine how the fight against the Trade Union Act can be conducted, and how the attempt at the application of its provisions can be prevented from disorganising the movement. The first essential is that there should be a common policy of the organised movement on the Act, and that policy can only be one which has the object of rendering the Act inoperative by refusal to comply with its provisions.

The Edinburgh Trades Union Congress

The Trades Union Congress at Edinburgh meets in the new war period. It is the first to be held in the situation created by the defeat of the general strike and of the miners' struggle. Last

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

year, the miners' struggle was still going on at the time of the Bournemouth Congress and naturally overshadowed other issues. Now it is clear how deeply the basis of the old trade union movement has been shattered. The T.U.C. meets in the new situation expressed in the issues of the Trade Union Act, the war preparation against the Soviet Union, and the breakdown of international trade union unity.

The old pre-general-strike apparatus of trade unionism can no longer in the new period of intensified class struggle stand up to the demands upon it. The high-water mark of its effort to cope with new problems was seen in the Scarborough Congress of 1924. Since then the tendency has been undoubtedly backward. The Scarborough resolutions expressed the fighting readiness of the rank and file, but they were only scraps of paper for the trade union bureaucracy. The general strike revealed the unsubstantial character of the "Left" section of the General Council, and already at Bournemouth, in 1926, they had all retreated into the fold of the reformists. This year there is every possibility of further surrender to capitalism on the part of the now consolidated trade union bureaucracy. Nevertheless, just as at the time of the Bournemouth Congress there was shown, in the very continuance of the miners' struggle, in the resolutions to support it by the levy and embargo and in the general strengthening of the rank and file left wing, that the movement for building a fighting revolutionary class movement was still going on under the crust of the weakening conservative leadership, so also now, in spite of apparent reaction and retrogression, the working class is still being driven in the direction of revolutionary resistance to capitalist attack. The reactionary leadership uses every influence to spread paralysis and make capitulation, and blames the "apathy" of the workers. Yet if one thing is certain it is that the present period is not one of mere stagnation. If that were so why should the whole energy of the reformist leaders be concentrated on the attack against the Communists and Left elements and on the endeavour to stifle every revolutionary expression? The reason is that the bankruptcy of the class-collaboration policy of so-called "sane" reformist trade unionism is now becoming increasingly so obvious and self-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

evident that its sponsors have to use every extraordinary measure of suppression in order to maintain their position of supremacy.

This is the only explanation of the retrograde character of the official movement, in spite of the increasing urgency for the workers to make preparations to fight to retrieve lost positions and stem further attacks. This is the explanation of the events at the Southport Miners' Conference, where, in spite of the critical position of the miners and the growing demand for a real facing of the crisis in all its aspects, there was witnessed a solid front against all fighting proposals. The delegates at this Conference were 95 per cent. of the full-time officials, and in the majority of districts they are selected on the basis of their position and not by a ballot vote of the rank and file. Mining officialism is threatened by the Left movement; the anger of the workers at the desperate position into which they are being driven culminates in a demand for the resignation of officials and their replacement by the younger active militants. Hence, in attacking the militant movement, the officials feel that they are defending their positions.

New Leadership not "Left" Leadership

With the certainty of declining industry, renewed attacks on the workers, and imperialist war, there is now no alternative between frank acceptance of the revolutionary position and black reaction and enslavement. The present period sees the final liquidation of the "Left" element on the General Council that carried all before it at the Hull and Scarborough Congresses. It is an instructive episode in the history of British trade unionism, not because of the individuals and personalities concerned, but because it is testimony of the evolution of the working-class movement towards clearer and sharper class issues. As long as "leftism" was a matter of phraseology, the Left leaders were able to maintain their position. As soon as it became clear that capitalism was throwing down a challenge that could only be met by action, the retreat began. Already, before the general strike, the difference between Left and Right in regard to the home situation had disappeared. Internationally, however, the appearance of a Left attitude could still be maintained. In the new war period, the challenge comes internationally as well as

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nationally, and consequently we see the crumpling up of the "Left" element on this field as well. In regard to international issues, the position is the same as in the home situation before the general strike, either revolutionary struggle of the workers or complete impotence in the face of the imperialist war.

The Paris Congress exposed the complete emptiness, chaos, and fiasco of the I.F.T.U. at the very moment of the most intense and menacing international situation. In the most critical time of threatening war against the Soviet Union, the Anglo-Russian Committee ceases to function. Instead we have fifteen pages of the Report of the General Council to the Edinburgh Congress devoted to relations with the Russian trade unions presented in such a way as to constitute an invitation to break with Russia. At Paris, Purcell's presidential address contained all the revolutionary phraseology of the left wing with a real emphasis on the urgent need for a world trade union international, combined with an appeal for this to come about by the movements of the world joining the decrepit, corrupt bureaucracy of the I.F.T.U. The Trades Union Congress is faced with this last culminating collapse of the "left" wing. It must demand that the signed pledge of the General Council to call an unconditional World Congress shall be honoured. Edinburgh must give a new lead for international unity or all hope of preventing war will be in vain. The General Council itself is faced with the alternative of making such an independent move or accepting the position of humble, chastened servants of Oudegeest and the other Social-Democrat counter-revolutionaries.

In the period of acute crisis, when no half-way position is possible, when the only prospect for successful resistance is by class-conscious mass struggle, the central problem is that of real new leadership. This must be solved by the trade union movement if it is to face the greater trials now coming. For that reason it is all the more necessary that at Edinburgh there shall be a clear-cut fight of the revolutionary elements without compromise or confusion.

CLEMENS DUTT

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PARIS CONGRESS OF THE I.F.T.U.

By HARRY POLLITT

THE Triennial Congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions met in Paris on the thirteenth anniversary of the outbreak of war. It is no coincidence that just as thirteen years ago the I.F.T.U. ignominiously collapsed when decisive action should have been taken, so on this occasion with a most serious international situation confronting the workers of the world, a situation calling for decisive action in many spheres, this futile International collapsed like a pack of cards, not as a result of fighting or facing these issues, but in an atmosphere of the most terrible intrigue, corruption, and "back-stairs" work that has ever disgraced the International Labour Movement.

All over the world the workers are facing a capitalist offensive on their wages, hours, and working conditions; industrial and political rights of organisation that have been looked upon as secure for all time are being ruthlessly suppressed and smashed in every capitalist country; the situation existing in China demands the most serious and careful attention; there is ever-increasing capitalist hostility against Soviet Russia; a terrible White Terror is reigning in Poland, the Balkans, and Hungary; yet these things apparently were not the concern of the I.F.T.U., and no policy or organisational measures emanated from the Paris Congress dealing with a single one of the fundamental issues now facing the working class.

It was common knowledge before this Congress met that financially, organisationally, and politically it was bankrupt. It has not, and never has had, any real international outlook. The bureaucrats in control of the machine have only been concerned with preserving the favour of the International Labour Office and carrying on a violent campaign to prevent any effective steps being taken to bring about unity in an international movement that is split as a result of the existence of two trade union internationals, and the fact that there are a number of countries whose trade union movements are not affiliated to either of these internationals.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The I.F.T.U. is the institution which Mr. Purcell in his presidential speech declared must provide the driving force for international trade unionism ; and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, knowing all the above facts but never taking the responsibility of acquainting trade unionists in this country with them, placed a resolution on the Agenda of the Paris Congress of this International calling for a Committee of Inquiry to be established " in order that the Federation may become an organisation of universal scope and influence."

The events in Paris should not give rise to the assumption that the General Council was standing for some fundamental change in the way in which international unity could be achieved. Its official resolution and Mr. Purcell's speech were in practical effect what Amsterdam has stood for ever since its inauguration, namely, that world unity can only come through the I.F.T.U. and any other existing International must be dissolved and its affiliated organisations automatically disaffiliated and unconditionally accept the constitution and statutes laid down by Amsterdam. Let us remember that at Vienna this was interpreted as only being possible when it was done in a manner " compatible with the dignity of the I.F.T.U." Paris has displayed the dignity of the I.F.T.U. before the workers of the world.

The workers everwhere must take into consideration the facts, and these are very simple. There is a Red International of Labour Unions in existence. Mr. Purcell in his speech referred to the necessity of getting contact with the Trade Union Movements of India, China, &c. The R.I.L.U. has already won the affiliation of the Chinese Trade Union Movement, and the Javanese, Mexican, and Japanese Trade Union Movements have all had close connections with the R.I.L.U.

At this point it is pertinent to quote what Fenner Brockway, speaking at the I.L.P. Summer School on August 5, said in regard to another International : he said the " Third International has accomplished magnificent work in making a contact with the coloured peoples, particularly in China, India, and Africa." It can be asserted without fear of contradiction that this statement is also true of the R.I.L.U. When the world situation compels the British Trade Union Movement to pay great attention to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

international organisation, when the acute capitalist crisis compels British trade unionists to seek new allies in India, China, South Africa, &c., is it to be expected that the Russian Trade Unions will leave the R.I.L.U. to join up with the I.F.T.U. whose Dutch, French, and Belgian leaders reign supreme in their European exclusiveness and loyalty to their capitalist masters at Geneva ?

The way to international trade union unity is not through the Vienna resolution of 1924 or the General Council's Paris resolution of 1927. The situation at the Paris Congress and the Brown disclosures once again provide the British Movement with the opportunity of rising to the new possibilities of the situation. It is no longer a question of appointing a new secretary or of obtaining new headquarters ; it is the supreme question of altering the whole conception of what international trade unionism means and deciding how best this reorganisation can be achieved out of the existing conditions.

What steps will be taken to achieve this result is a matter which will have to be decided by the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress. The British Movement cannot exist in isolation. To those who say "a plague on both your houses" it is only necessary to mention that the world situation in which the British Trade Union Movement finds itself, compels it to participate in international affairs.

The key to the situation is in the hands of the British and Russian Movements. If the Anglo-Russian Advisory Council calls an immediate conference for the purpose of reviewing the position and the necessary *will* to unity is developed at that conference, in a short space of time world unity can be achieved.

The Russians are the strongest section in the R.I.L.U., the British have been the strongest section in the I.F.T.U. Both these trade union movements have a great influence on the trade union movements of South America, India, the whole of the Scandinavian countries, and the revolutionary workers in Germany, France, &c. Further, they could summon to their assistance many prominent international trade union leaders who are personally in favour of unity, and who would be willing to join an Anglo-Russian Committee which was co-opting for this specific task all those international leaders willing to co-operate in organising a world con-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ference at which the trade union movement of every country in the world would have an opportunity of being represented, together with representation from the International Trade Secretariats.

At such a Congress one united trade union international could be created (an *International* in every sense of the word) and an end made once and for all to the present splits and divisions that exist in the World Labour Movement.

The Edinburgh Trades Union Congress has a tremendous responsibility before it. It will have to consider both the General Council's Report on its connections with the Russian Trade Union Movement and also the policy of the General Council in regard to the Paris Congress. It is to be hoped that there will be no attempts to divert the Congress to side issues ; the international situation is such that it will be a crime against the working class if decisive steps are not taken at Edinburgh to bring about unity.

If the spirit which was in evidence at the Hull, Scarborough, and Bournemouth Congresses is again evidenced at Edinburgh, and if those British leaders who in speeches on Russia or in articles on *Trade Union Unity* supported the movement for a single world international, boldly face the Congress and fight for those things to which they have paid lip-service, a mighty movement will be developed that will sweep away all the bureaucratic barriers, the lies, treachery, and conspiracy against unity that have made the official leadership of the International Federation of Trade Unions stink in the nostrils of every decent worker.

The World Congress must be called. That is the sole way to world unity. Whatever is decided with regard to the Anglo-Russian Committee, the responsibility rests with the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress to see that a World Trade Union Congress is convened.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF U.S.S.R.

By MAURICE DOBB

IT is now nearly ten years since the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" in Russia passed from an insurrectionary slogan into a political reality. And it is now nearly seven years since the end of civil war on six or seven fronts ended the military period of the revolution and gave the first "breathing-space" for economic reconstruction.

When by the end of November, 1920, the remnants of Wrangel's invading army had been finally driven out of the Crimea, Russian economic life was at the lowest ebb which one can conceive possible, short of complete catastrophe and collapse. Industrial production as a whole stood at less than a sixth of the pre-war amount; while the activity of blast furnaces, as the basis of the essential metal trades, had sunk to the ludicrous figure of 2 per cent. of the normal. Even stocks of goods carried over from earlier years, which had served as a mainstay during the war period, were in most cases approaching complete exhaustion. The fuel situation was so acute as to threaten a complete stoppage of transport. The coal-field of the Donetz and the oil-fields of Grosny and Baku had only just passed back under the sphere of the Soviet Government; and locomotives had to crawl their way with green wood to heat their boilers. Some idea of the disorganisation caused to transport by the civil war can be gauged from the fact that in 1919 about 60 per cent. of the railway mileage was in the hands of the White armies, and in 1920 80 per cent. of the railroad was within the sphere of military operations. By the end of 1920 more than half the locomotives were disabled and awaiting repair (the figure already stood at 30 per cent. in October, 1917), while over 2,000 bridges and 1,000 miles of permanent way had been destroyed. In agriculture, the compulsory requisitioning of the peasant surplus, imposed by war necessities, had caused the area of peasant sowings to shrink by some 30 per

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cent., and the total yield of grain by more than a half; so that the ration of the town worker in several months of 1920 was insufficient to keep him from starvation for more than some eleven to thirteen days in the month. The position of important raw materials was even worse: the cotton crop in Turkestan, for instance, as a result of the civil war was in 1919 only 6 per cent. of the pre-war yield. A downward spiral of collapse had been established in which food and fuel could not be moved from distant regions to the towns for lack of transport; transport breakdown threatened from lack of available fuel and the inability of the metal industry to conduct the necessary repairs; industry in turn was shackled by shortage of materials, fuel, and food, while the Donetz coal mines themselves were at a standstill because they could not procure food supplies for their workers. At the base of the whole stood the peasant, unwilling to plough and reap and send to market unless sufficient inducement were given him in the shape of available supplies of manufactured goods. Finally, as though a malignant deity schemed to make collapse inevitable, the spectre of famine, such as visits agrarian countries once in a lifetime, descended on the Volga region.

It was a brave prophet who in those dark days declared that Russia could pull through to convalescence without going cap in hand to the pawnbrokers in the West; and the *émigrés* in Berlin, Prague, Paris, and London, whose military ventures had ended in fiasco, joyfully acclaimed the famine of 1921 as the beginning of the end. It even seemed doubtful whether Russia could climb out of the depths and "mark time" at a low economic level, until such time as the advance of the workers' movement in Western countries brought her aid. Russia in pre-war days had relied on borrowing from abroad to the extent of over £20 million each year, and her industry had relied extensively on foreign managerial and technical personnel. Her existing plight was unprecedented in modern history; and subsequent events were to show Austria snatched from death only by virtue of a "stabilisation loan" from the League of Nations, Germany, in much less serious plight than Russia, salvaged only by pledging herself to Wall Street, and even Paris and London having to raise American credits in order to stabilise their foreign exchange.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet seven years have proved the Cassandras unjustified. No workers' governments in Western Europe have appeared to lend Russia aid. No foreign loan was forthcoming at Genoa, save on conditions which amounted to economic servitude of Russia to the capitalist West. The amount of foreign capital procured by means of "concessions" has been insignificant—less than £1 million per year on the average. Short-term credits procured in the course of foreign trade were no greater, and probably less, than is received by the majority of nations who trade with richer neighbours. Yet to-day Russian industry, in spite of the devastation of six years of war and invasion, approaches and even surpasses the pre-war level of production.[1] Real wages now exceed the pre-war amount; and to wages must be added gains in the shape of an extensive system of social insurance, steadier employment,[2] the eight-hour day, and a fortnight's holiday with full pay, which must bring the material position of the worker up to at least 25 per cent. above the pre-war standard. The currency has been stabilised, a new monetary unit, the *chervonetz*, based on gold and foreign valuta, introduced—a stabilisation which preceded that of the mark, the lira, or the franc, and even preceded by a year the return of Britain to the gold standard.

Nor is this all. In addition to the restoration of shattered productive forces, Russia is now making important progress toward industrialisation and the raising of industrial production above the pre-war level. In addition to re-equipment of existing factories, new factories are being built. In addition to reconstructing the old transport system, the construction of new lines is being set on foot. In addition to restoring the old sources of fuel for industry, a whole new network of electrical power is

---

[1] It is interesting to compare this with Mr. J. W. F. Rowe's estimate, for the London and Cambridge Economic Service, that Britain has reached at most no more than 94 per cent. of pre-war production. Of course, just as this figure is approximate and subject to a margin of error, being only an estimate, so are all Russian comparisons with pre-war, since in their case the 1913 figure is an estimate only.

[2] It is true that figures of unemployment are actually high. But this represents, in the main, influx of peasants from the villages, and coexists with a steady increase in the total numbers of workers employed—for instance, a 6 per cent. increase in 1925-26.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

being created, of which seven large stations with a 166,000 kilowatt capacity have already been opened. In the current year, 1926-27, sums equivalent to about £85 million are being applied to capital development in state industry (including electrification); while capital accumulation of all kinds (including transport, agriculture, housing, &c.) is estimated to amount to over £190 million.[3] If we make allowance for the fact that part of this figure represents sums set aside to repair current depreciation and wear and tear, we find that the figure of *net* capital accumulation represents nearly 8 per cent of the total national income of Russia, and compares very favourably with the figure of pre-war capital accumulation, which was 8.5 per cent. of the national income according to reliable estimates. In Britain, which has a national income per head four times as great as Russia, capital accumulation is no more than 12-13 per cent. of the national income and still falls behind the pre-war amount. On the basis of this, Soviet official plans anticipate an annual growth of some 15 per cent. in industry over the next five years; while with regard to the total national income the most cautious estimates anticipate a 6-7 per cent. growth per year. These figures compare with a pre-war annual growth of 2.5 per cent. in the national income (Professor Prokopovitch's estimate) and of 3.8 per cent. in industry, and with a 3-5 per cent. annual growth in U.S.A. and 2.1 per cent. in Britain.[4]

This reconstruction period of seven years can be divided into three main phases.

First was the fierce struggle against the famine and the fuel and transport crisis in 1920-22. This showed itself financially in a universal shortage of circulating capital—an inability of industry to find the means to purchase the food, fuel, and materials with which to keep its plant in operation. The problem facing the Government was to concentrate the limited resources which

[3] These figures are arrived at by converting chervonetz roubles into £'s according to the ratio of their internal purchasing power (as expressed by the Gosplan Wholesale I.N. and the Board of Trade Wholesale I.N.), which gives a truer picture than converting roubles then at the par of exchange.

[4] Figures based on articles by Professor Weinstein in *Socialist Economy* (Russian), 1926, No. IV; Strumilin in *Planned Economy* (Russian), 1926, No. IV, &c., the translation of which I owe to H. C. Stevens.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it had upon the fuel and transport and transport-repairing industries, even though this meant a ruthless reduction of the number of persons on rations in Moscow and Petrograd, or an actual closing of textile, leather, and other factories producing finished goods. Industries producing secondary necessaries for the urban population had to be starved of resources in order to provide the funds for purchasing from the peasant more primary necessaries and coaxing him to extend the area and intensiveness of his cultivation. The whole forces of the Communist Party were mobilised and turned on to the economic front, as before they had been turned on to the military front. Drastic economies were introduced into transport and fuel, in the former by a 25 per cent. reduction of staff and decentralisation, in the latter by "concentration" of production on the more efficient pits and by mobilising available transport facilities for carrying food supplies to the Donetz miners. As a result, by the autumn of 1922 the fuel and transport crisis had passed, and the finishing industries in the final months of the year showed a phenomenal recovery, while with an improved harvest and improved transport of food, the real wages of workers more than doubled in the course of the year. At the same time the new form of organisation of State industry which replaced the temporary over-centralised system under "war communism" had come into being; and though heavily handicapped by lack of financial resources, the new Trusts (groups of enterprises governed by a Board appointed by the State in consultation with the T.U.'s as "Trustees," and possessed of commercial competence to operate on the market at their own discretion) had successfully established their position, and had in turn created their own commercial apparatus in the form of Syndicates and an Industrial Bank to pool their resources and provide them with short- and long-term credit.

The *second* period, extending over 1923-24, witnessed a more complicated stage of reconstruction. No longer shortage of fuel and food, but shortage of raw material, handicapped industry. Industrial production had recovered to about a third, and agricultural output to about two-thirds of the normal. The new industrial organs had become established and were increasing in strength and influence. The first steps were being taken to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

balance the State Budget, terminate inflation, create a balance between imports and exports and stabilise the currency—all of which involved further parsimony of State grants and credits to industry and increased taxation. The main problem of the period was that wide divergence between industrial and agricultural prices which came to be called "the scissors"—a divergence which culminated in a severe "sales crisis" in the autumn of 1923, owing to the relative highness of industrial prices and the relative lowness of peasant purchasing power. The diagnosis of this problem and its solution proved to be a turning point in Russian development which ranked with October, 1917, and March, 1921. Partly the "scissors" was due to the slower reconstruction of industry than of agriculture; and one group of opinion which came to constitute the opposition within the Party in the 1923-24 discussions laid exclusive stress on this cause, and urged a more rapid rate of industrial development by accumulating as capital the profits of State industry, and by a policy of "dictatorship of industry" to strengthen State industry on the market. But the most important cause, at any rate of the most acute phase, of the "scissors" in the autumn was precisely this policy of "dictatorship of industry": State Trusts and Syndicates had used their monopoly power to raise prices and secure monopoly profit at the expense of the peasantry; and, as in all monopoly actions, these prices and profits could only be maintained on the basis of restricted output and sales. The crucial question, accordingly, confronted the Communists: Was socialist industry to be developed at the expense of the "exploitation" of peasant agriculture through the monopoly power of State industry on the market? Among others Preobrazhensky answered in the affirmative: the necessary socialist accumulation could only come from the profits of trade with small-scale private economy, as Imperialist countries draw "super-profit" from colonial trade, and as mediæval towns grew rich on the proceeds of trade with the dependent countryside. But the majority view in the Party eschewed this policy, first because it would strike a blow at that union of urban worker with the poor and middle peasant of the village which Lenin had laid as the corner-stone of the New Economic Policy—the *sine qua non* of working-class hegemony in

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an agrarian country; second, because such a policy necessarily involved lessened trade between town and village, a smaller market for industry and a smaller inducement to the peasant to extend his supply of the food and raw materials so urgently needed by the towns. This official policy by the end of 1924 had managed to close the "scissors" by a 30 per cent. reduction of industrial prices and a 70-80 per cent. raising of agricultural prices; while industrial costs had at the same time been lowered by over 20 per cent. through a further "concentration" of industry, reducing overhead charges and economising circulation capital. The monetary reform had been introduced in March of the year and maintained in spite of a poor harvest in the summer; while industrial production had expanded to over a half of pre-war.

The *third* period, starting with 1925, may be said at the same time to have closed the phase of reconstruction and to have opened the phase of progress beyond the pre-war level. It was now no longer a question of insufficient circulating capital to keep existing plant at work (although shortage of raw materials still remained a difficulty): the possibility of economies through concentrating work on the most efficient plant was now exhausted; and with the approach to the normal level of production the question came to the fore of the renewal of basic or fixed capital, depreciated and worn-out in the war years, and its extension. This task, requiring as it did parsimony in the present, in order to release resources to build factories, railways, electric power stations, &c., for the future, was a problem which dwarfed even those of the dark days of 1921. It was a problem to be calculated no longer in millions or tens of millions of gold roubles, but in hundreds of millions, and in milliards.

The crucial question concerned the source of the funds necessary for this capital extension, and whether sufficient accumulation was possible to permit the building of socialist industry in the middle of a hostile world. Four sources were open. *First* was the extraction of "super-profit" from trade with peasant agriculture. *Second* was the method of inflation, which imposes a forced levy on all persons whose money incomes lay behind the inflationary rise of prices. *Third* was restricted present consumption by the workers themselves, in the form of wages rising at a slower

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pace than productivity. *Fourth* came stringent economies in industrial administration by means of "socialist rationalisation," leaving a surplus of resources available to finance capital development.

The first of these sources was ruled out as the main source of accumulation by the decisions in the "scissors" discussion in 1923-24. A certain amount could be drawn from the profits of trade with the peasantry, but only in the shape of a minimum, not a monopoly profit. The second method resolved itself in the final analysis into either the first or the third, and any considerable reliance on this method would endanger the stability of the monetary unit. Though expansion of credit, so long as it did not out-distance expansion of production and so did not raise the price-level, could play a minor rôle in supplying funds to industry, its rôle could be no more than a minor one. It was, therefore, the last two sources of accumulation on which principal reliance had to be placed. The fact that the process of capital accumulation, now resting on a socialist, not a class basis, already reaches the pre-war rate is a measure of the success in handling the greatest, if less spectacular, problem which the new Russia has so far faced.

But while the quantitative aspect of Russia's economic progress can be gauged in figures, there remains an important qualitative aspect which is less easily measured. How to test whether the social tendencies which underlie the statistician's figures are working in the direction of socialism, or whether, on the contrary, they represent from the socialist point of view a retreat? To deny the existence of any tendencies of this latter character would be to deny that Russia is in passage through a transition period. The New Economic Policy, inaugurated in 1921, does not represent complete socialism, nor is it the product of any "defeat." It is a system adapted to the economic circumstances of the transition period—a "mixed system" (which Lenin called State-capitalism), comprising socialist large-scale industry, private small-scale industry, and backward peasant agriculture. The unique character of this "mixed system" is that the workers hold the "commanding heights"—holding them by virtue of their alliance with the poorer peasantry—and that the socialist

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

element predominates, since it covers 80 per cent. of industrial production. Naturally, the tendency exists for the non-socialist elements to increase their relative influence, for capital to accumulate in the hands of private traders (*Nepmen*) in the town and of rich peasants (*Kulaks*) in the village, and for germs of new class monopoly and class division in this way to arise.

But against these tendencies exists the strong influence which the ruling party can exercise through its control of big industry, of taxation, of credit, of education, and by its lead in the co-operatives. These can be used to stem any tendency to a revival of class differentiation. For instance, the State has power to discriminate against the *kulak* in the matter of taxation and of credit, while the co-operatives lend special aid to the weaker peasant and so prevent him from becoming an exploitable victim for his richer neighbour. Again, the universities are now peopled by workers to at least 80 per cent., while the ideology taught there is predominantly Marxist, so that the old divorce between the creatures of higher education and the masses is well in process of being destroyed. Through the growth of State industry and the industrialisation of the country, through the influence exerted by its control of the "key positions," and through the gradual transformation of peasant agriculture, not by the compulsory methods of the "war communism" period nor by Preobrazhensky's policy of "crushing out" the peasant, but *via* the intermediate stage of rural "co-operative collectivism," the ruling party of Russia places confidence in a steady growth of the socialist elements in this "mixed system" and a progress towards a classless system, even though Russia remain encircled by a hostile capitalist world. And it is precisely because the triumph of socialism in Russia depends upon the steady progress of this industrialisation, that Russia of all countries has most to lose from the phantom of war which has once again begun to prowl about the chancelleries of European capitals.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BRITISH WAR PREPARATIONS IN INDIA

By A. N. BHADURI

INDIA has always been the strongest base for British imperialist wars during the last hundred years of world history. To mention only a few, the three Afghan wars, the Boer war, the Boxer uprising in China, the two Burmese wars and the last world war, were waged with Indian men and money. In Mesopotamia, Palestine, Persia, Turkey, Africa, Egypt, Nepal, Tibet, Indian mercenaries and resources were used for the imperialist expansion of Great Britain. Hong Kong was wrested from the Chinese with the help of Indian soldiers ; opium was thrust down their throats with the help of the Indian police, and even in revolutionary China of to-day, Indian soldiers are mobilised in order to drown in blood the Chinese struggle for freedom. India has only too often stood in the way of human freedom, though generally against her own will. The vast reserve of Indian men and money and the strategic value of the occupation of this continent, largely helped the British capitalist class to win its dominant position in the world, to maintain which another war, more sinister than ever, is again being organised.

This "war of civilisation" against Soviet Russia is a question of life and death for the cause of Indian freedom. The declaration of war against Soviet Russia, who makes no secret of her moral and material support for the struggle for freedom of the Asiatic nations from the yoke of international imperialism headed by Great Britain, is as a matter of sheer logic, a declaration of war against revolutionary Asia. India forged in 1914 more strongly on her own neck the chains of political and economic slavery by strengthening with life and money an arch-reactionary force in the world, British imperialism—the most perfected stage of world capitalism. Indian middle-class nationalism, by supporting a decadent culture of vested interests and by assisting British militarism, which is the mainstay of the huge irresponsible

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bureaucratic machine in India, is bound sooner or later to drag the Indian people into a criminal war against the aspirations of Asia and against the exploited workers of the world. Indians who have nothing in common with the interests of the imperialists must work to prevent this crime of declaring war against their own interests, a war for swelling the pockets of their own oppressors, a war that is prepared to lower their already miserable standard of living.

But the murderous war plans in India are organised on the certain support of the privileged ruling class of India. The Conservative Government of England is feverishly seeking to foment a war against Soviet Russia, after being sure of the help of the Indian bourgeoisie in her military operations in India. The buying up of the Indian bourgeoisie for the stabilisation of British capitalism and the winning of them over to her sinister war plans is an important chapter of Indian history of recent years. It is worth while studying the history of the bourgeoisie in a fairly industrialised Asiatic country like India, where the interests of this class are interwoven with the interests of the British imperialists.

The world war, which revolutionised Britain's economic relation with India, brought the Indian people almost to the brink of a social revolution. The new imperial policy after the suppression of this mass discontent, is a policy of "economic concession and political repression." The new phase is marked by the growth of Indian industries and by a new agricultural policy (the new Viceroy being an agricultural expert and ironically called a peasant-viceroy), and the export of British capital with increasing rapidity in order to industrialise India with the help of Anglo-Indian capital and thus to restore with the help of Indian cheap labour, raw materials and the Indian market, Great Britain's badly shaken industrial monopoly in the East. The removal of duties on imported machinery, the removal of the cotton excise duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and the raising of the duty on imported cotton goods from 7 to 11 per cent., the enormous bounty from the Government to the iron and steel industry, political pseudo-reforms, the recognition of the Government prize-boys in the League of Nations, in short a junior partnership in the exploitation of the masses, and lastly the fear of a social revolution, all these causes have driven

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the nationalist leaders (since they come from the land-owning or industrialist class) to the side of the Government, and have led them to carry out the British imperialist policy both inside and outside India with little or no resistance. The following opinion of one of the most prominent spokesmen of the bourgeois nationalists, Mr. B. C. Pal (once in the camp of the Bengal revolutionaries), will clearly expose the betrayal of the nationalists and the trend of events in India :—

> Economically, Britain's possession of India is also a very great asset to herself and her overseas empire. India's raw material, cheap labour and huge unprotected markets offer almost incalculable opportunities of exploitation to British imperial industries, trade and commerce.
>
> The attainment of a national government in India by *timely and friendly compromise* with the representatives of British imperial interests will alone provide for the adequate protection of these very large interests which the British have acquired in this country.
>
> A possible revolution will be the greatest conceivable menace to those interests, and British statesmanship, therefore, must put forth its best efforts to secure the *timely and friendly compromise*, but before this compromise can be effected the British will naturally want reasonable guarantees for peace and good government in India which is so essential for the protection and promotion of their special interests.

This speech is addressed to the " representatives of British imperial interests " showing the advantages of a " timely and friendly compromise " with the Indian bourgeoisie for the united exploitation of the " unprotected market, cheap labour and vast resources " of India. This classical, frank and conscious statement from one of the prominent mouthpieces of the Indian upper class, proves most conclusively an open betrayal of the nationalist movement. With this certain and important support, the British imperialists can afford to prepare another bold crusade against Soviet Russia. It is worth while also noting the statement from the report of the Fiscal Commission, consisting largely of a radical section of the Indian bourgeoisie, which was appointed in October, 1921, with the object of examining the tariff question :—

> It is mere commonplace to say that a rich India is a tower of strength to the Empire, while an economically weak India is a source of weakness . . . *India would have been of far greater help to England during the war* if the policy of protection had been adopted at least a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> generation ago . . . This (revision of the tariff policy) would have been to her great advantage and would have been beneficial to the Empire . . .

No further comment is necessary to prove the object of the era of Protectionism in India. In order to realise England's further war-preparations in India it is necessary fully to understand its economic basis. That there is a systematic preparation for war is self-evident in view of the fact that more than one-third of the Indian revenues are still used for the military budget. The war preparations in India are of various kinds and have recently grown rapidly in size and intensity. They can be divided into several categories.

Political Preparation for War

The main political object of the British Government is to buy up the Indian leaders in time, in order to be sure of their help with men and money, when declaring war against Russia. After the Indian revolutionary movement had made some attempts to create revolutionary risings in 1915, the Home Rule movement was organised throughout the country and the British Government promised the leaders constitutional reforms in August, 1917, in order to secure Indian men and money and support in the war against "barbaric Germany." To-day, after the mass movement of 1921 and the Chinese revolution, Britain again finds it essential to buy up the upper class by two arguments :—

(a) The argument of offering a substantial share in the government of the country, that is to say, a share in the exploitation of the people.

(b) The argument that the upper class must be protected against Bolshevist Russia which threatens private property.

Since all the Indian leaders come from the landowning or industrialist class, it is not surprising that they are ready to use these arguments for their own political benefit. All the Indian leaders are, in one form or another, negotiating with the British government and some of them are even now (June-July) in London in order to fix the terms of the betrayal. The coming reforms of 1929 are a very important step in the war preparations of England just as the 1917 reforms substantially helped England in the war against Germany.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It must be remembered that it is only British India that will get reforms, and that it is the policy of the British Government to divide India into two parts, viz, (a) the so-called Swaraj India, and (b) the India of the Princes. A study of the negotiations of the government with the Council of Princes shows that it is the intention of the Government to make the Princes responsible to the Government of Great Britain and not to the Swaraj Government of India, so that if Swaraj India were to go against England in her war plans, the Princes' India may be used for the purpose of supplying troops and money not only against Russia, but also to crush any attempt at revolution in India. The facts regarding the anglicisation of the armies of the Indian States, the increase in the number of troops in the States, the more effective control of the armies, the occupation of the posts of military ministers and the training of the sons of the Princes in England under the control of English agents, all point to the conclusion that the States are being specially and rapidly prepared for rendering service to Great Britain in the coming war.

The ideological propaganda which is being conducted by the Press agencies, by the information departments of the British Government in India and by members of the British Labour Party, is clearly directed against Russia. By continual reiteration of the Russian menace to the safety of the Indian people, England is creating a fear of Soviet Russia. The propertied class is to be frightened into helping Britain against the U.S.S.R. by being told that the Bolshevik movement intends to seize their estates. The Hindus, especially in the Punjab, are being told that Soviet Russia is helping Afghanistan in order to set up Islamic rule in India. The Mohammedans are being told that Bolshevik Russia is an enemy of the Islamic religion and of all religions. In this manner the help of all groups is being secured.

War Preparations in Industry

The establishment of the Tariff Board, besides having the object of buying the nationalist leaders as has been already mentioned, is intended to facilitate the production and storing of war materials in India. The industries which were practically called into being and enormously developed during the war for the supply

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of war materials, especially the iron and steel industry, are now technically well equipped through " subsidies " and " protection," and in the event of a war, will represent an important technical basis for British militarism in India.

This is remarkably confirmed by the evidence given before an official commission last year, when a representative of one of the Indian steel producing firms said that his firm received " from time to time " orders from the Ordnance Department of the Government of India " for various parts of gun mountings and other munitions " as their plant was " particularly well-adapted for the manufacture of a large variety of castings for munition purposes." The same firm was also asked to undertake the " manufacture of aerial bombs weighing respectively 5 cwts., 1 cwts., and 20 lb." The probable number required was stated to be 5,000 or more per month. The representative of the firm further said that " in the event of war, a vast quantity of special steel for manufacture of high explosives and shrapnel shells, gun tubes and jackets, ribs, barrels, &c., were certain to be required at a very short notice. Their works could be turned to this class with little or no delay." This vast storing of war materials in India, which is surely also going on from many other sources unknown to us, most conclusively proves that the British government intends to wage a war in which India will play an important part.

Among other industrial war preparations may be mentioned the following :—

(a) The participation of Indian capitalists in the building up of Indian industries and protection given to steel, paper, cement, mining and other industries, whose products, though alleged to be Indian, are used largely for the manufacture of munitions and war material and will be used in future solely for war purposes.

(b) Freedom from customs duty for motor lorries. The importance of this will be seen from the fact that special motor-lorry transport service is being arranged between Karachi and Peshawar. In the last war the motor-lorry (armoured cars) transport was a very important factor in the military success of the French and British armies. It must be remembered that a railway strike would endanger the transport of munitions and therefore the importance of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

motor lorries is increased. Military motor transport roads are also being made in the Burmese frontier region.

(c) The monopoly and use of the entire rubber industry for war purposes.

(d) The new agricultural policy is clearly intended to win over the peasantry under the small landholders. The biggest zemindars, enjoying an artificially prolonged life, are already slaves of the Government. The establishment of co-operative banks under Government control will assist in solving the problem of food supply in times of crisis.

Military War Preparations

It is impossible to enumerate all the military preparations for war that are now being undertaken. The following are only some of the most important of these measures :—

(a) The Singapore base which serves the following purposes. It controls the Pacific and China, keeps Holland at least neutral, threatens French possessions in the East and makes it difficult for France to go to war against England, threatens the Japanese Navy, and enables the landing of Australian troops quickly in India in the event of a revolution.

(b) The secret naval base in Trincomally.

(c) The construction of the air base at Karachi.

(d) The concentration of the air fleet in the North-West frontier provinces—the probable Verdun of the coming war. This air-craft base is one of the best technically equipped in the world ; one of the first duties which the present Viceroy, Lord Irwin, performed on his arrival in India, was an extended tour of this frontier.

(e) The already mentioned motor-lorry transport between Karachi and Peshawar.

(f) The very costly Khyber Pass railway and the new strategic railways on the Afghan frontier now under construction.

(g) The projected railway to connect Bengal with Burma, and the one between Burma and Siam.

(h) The Royal Indian Navy, whose sole function is to co-ordinate the action of the Indian Fleet with the British Fleet in the Persian Gulf, which dominates Mesopotamia,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(i) Lord Haldane's proposal to transfer the British expeditionary force to India for the purpose of being used in Asia, *i.e.*, against Russia and China. This remarkable proposal for concentrating the British Expeditionary Force in India has been discussed in a leading article in the Calcutta *Statesman*, which is usually very well informed about official intentions and a strong hint is given that this plan is under consideration by the Government of India and the Imperial Government, and that it is strongly supported by the military authorities. Before the war, it was pointed out, the Expeditionary Force was kept in England because "it was known that it might have to be landed on the continent of Europe." The question, says the *Statesman*, arises "whether England is any longer the most suitable place for the whole striking force, where exactly the *danger centres* are." It should also be remembered that the growing consciousness of the British working class as witnessed during the last General Strike might endanger the transport of troops in times of crisis. The *Statesman* dwells further on "danger centres" which leaves no shade of doubt about England's sinister preparations of war against Soviet Russia and Asia. It is stated that—

> The likelihood of a necessity of shipping the force across the Channel is clearly a good deal less than before the war, whereas prospects that it may have to be employed in the *Eastern Mediterranean*, the *Black Sea* or *the Far East* are greater than of old. The last case has in fact arisen and we have now 25,000 troops in China. Of these India has supplied two battalions from her own army and two battalions from the British garrison in India. The bulk has had to be drawn from the expeditionary troops retained at home, and clearly had they been in India they could have been dispatched to China more quickly and more economically.

The journal further gives financial reasons and adds with naïve hypocrisy, that this step will release the serious strain of the military budget on the country!

(j) The modernisation and control of the armies of the Indian native states, as already mentioned.

(k) The establishment of new munition factories in India.

(l) On the pretext of liberating slaves and stopping human sacrifices in the wild jungle regions of Northern Burma, the Government of India is making a military inspection of the frontier between Burma and China. So long as Southern China was a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

helpless victim of Great Britain's opium policy and military aggression, the military authorities who are responsible for the "Safety of India" concentrated their sole atention on the North-West frontier. But now that China has resorted to armed resistance to British imperialism it has been suddenly discovered that the wild tribes in the North of Burma were practising human sacrifice (although apparently on a very much smaller scale than the British Empire) and a Captain of the British Army was sent out to bring the tribe to reason. Last winter the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army travelled to Bhamo on the Irrawady, and from there he proceeded, mainly on foot, down the Burmo-Chinese frontier, in order to make an inspection of that imperfectly known region. "We have got the North-West frontier always before us," said Sir William Birdwood on March 5, 1927, and "and I may say we have to keep strict watch on the North-East frontier also. We know what Bolshevist propaganda is doing not only in Afghanistan, but also in China." Commenting on this warning the *Englishman* of Calcutta, a semi-official organ of the Government of India, wrote :—

> If India is to be confronted permanently with a hostile China as well as a hostile Russia, additional precautions on the Burma frontier will be essential.

The Calcutta *Forward*, the organ of the Indian Swaraj Party published an article recently in which it warned the people of India that "the British government was preparing to advance towards China on land." For this article the Government of Burma has prohibited the *Forward* to enter Burma, a prohibition that caused great indignation in India.

(m) The increased expenditure on political Secret Service in Afganistan, Russia, Persia, Turkey and China.

One need not be a Communist to realise the conclusive significance of these facts as revealing a systematic preparation for war against Soviet Russia. A politically and economically enslaved India is the strongest base for British military operations. The subjection of India has kept humanity in poverty, and perpetually on the brink of imperialist wars. We are faced with a situation to-day when we have to decide again whether we can permit this crime against humanity for the sake of imperialist profits.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN CHINA

By EARL BROWDER

THERE are so few data on exact wages and working conditions in China, that anything that can be added to the store of information on the subject is of value. Therefore, in the following article, I have condensed the most important observations made on this subject during a five months visit covering the provinces of Kwangtung, Kiangsi, Hupeh, and Hunan. During this time I and my colleagues made one trip of twenty-five days through the interior of Kwangtung and Kiangsi, and later a trip of five days through Hunan, most of which time was spent in the smaller cities and towns which are seldom heard of outside of China. Thus we obtained a picture of conditions throughout South and Central China, in the large cities as well as small towns, as they obtained in February, March, April and May of 1927.

Canton (Kwantung Province) was our first point of investigation. This is a city of over a million population, the Southern gateway to China, the centre of the Nationalist movement for years and the only place in China where trade unions were legal before the middle of last year. Canton was the headquarters of the All-China Labour Federation from 1922 to the beginning of 1927. It is not, however, a modern industrial city, like Shanghai or Hankow, but almost entirely one with commercial and handicraft industries. In spite of the handicap of this fact, the workers of Canton were enjoying conditions better than we found later in any other place. Since we were there, it must be remembered, the *coup d'état* of Li Chi-sen, lieutenant of Chiang Kai-shek, has placed power in the hands of the enemies of the workers ; this fact is probably already showing itself in a worsening of conditions ; but of the details of this we as yet know nothing. We deal with Canton as it was in February.

There are approximately 230,000 workers in Canton organised in the trade unions. Of these about 10,000 are industrial workers

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the modern sense, the rest being artisans, shop clerks, and coolies. These industrial workers constitute a sort of economic aristocracy, their wages and working conditions being much higher than the rest of the working class. They consist in the main of seamen, railway workers, chauffeurs, electric light and waterworks employees, arsenal workers, the employees of a few small textile mills and machine shops, and modern printing plants.

The usual wage of workers in these lines is $30 per month. (A Chinese dollar is nominally about the same as 1 rouble Russian, or 50 cents U.S., but Chinese currencies are almost universally depreciated about 20 per cent. at this time.) This wage allows for no rest days ; Sundays are worked the same as other days, this being true in Canton for *all* workers. The railroad workers get a wage somewhat above this average, because, although they also work on Sundays, they now get paid double-time for this day. Chauffeurs are another special category ; on account of shortage of skilled men they were receiving $60 (Chinese) per month. Almost all of these 10,000 workers have the eight-hour day, nominally, but " military emergencies " constantly cancel this " rule."

The artisans (handicraft workers) constitute the main body of the Canton working class. The principal groups are, the workers in matting, bamboo work, ivory and bone, silk, tea, metal, herbs, earthenware, firecrackers, paper, furniture, wood-carving, marble, and precious stones. They generally work, two to six artisans, in the shop with their employer, who also works alongside of them. These little shops are scattered along the business streets, the entire front being open, the men working next to the street where the prospective customers are passing along. They eat and live with their employer, working twelve to sixteen hours per day, seven days per week ; their only holidays are at New Year, when they have seven to ten days. Apprentices work for three to five years for nothing but food and bed ; at the end of their apprenticeship they begin to draw wages, $5 to $7 per month, which gradually increases, up to $20 per month, with a very few highly-skilled workers, of course, getting more. The wage for an artisan of average skill is about $20 per month when he has been in the trade for ten years. In addition to his wage, the artisan is fed on a bowl of rice two or three times a day, with a piece of pork twice a month ;

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and has a hole to sleep in, or a bench in the shop. The conditions of work of the artisans, especially in the interior of China and in the small towns, are distinctly semi-feudal.

The coolies form a large and important part of the working class in Canton, as everywhere in China. There are several groups, such as rickshaw coolies, cart coolies, warehouse coolies, &c. They perform the labour that in other countries is done by animals or machinery ; it is absolutely "inhuman," if that word can have any meaning, as it is almost impossible to believe that human beings can continue to live, bearing such burdens every day in the year, for ten to fourteen hours a day. The rickshaw coolies take the place of horses and automobiles for city transport, and spend hours on end, running at a smart pace, to carry their more fortunate fellow citizens several miles for from 5 to 20 cents. These coolies not only bear the burden of their physical loads, but also a terrific burden of taxation and middlemen. Thus, the rickshaw coolies, even in Canton, pay a tax which, in proportion to their earnings, is doubtless the heaviest borne by any section of the population. Paid in the first place to the Government by the owner of the rickshaw, it is then added to the rent which the coolie must pay ; but when it gets to the coolie it is 12 cents instead of 5 cents. The coolies of all kinds and grades suffer from the middleman, who contracts jobs and then lets them out to all sorts of sub-middlemen, so that the coolies get about half what has actually been paid for the work. I was told of instances which the union had investigated, where the coolies had received less than 20 per cent. The average earnings of an able-bodied young coolie is $15 per month—when employed. Unemployment, a terrible scourge for all kinds of labour in China, is especially chronic among the coolies, on account of the constant flow of peasants, driven from the land, coming into the cities. Old and infirm coolies live from hand to mouth on the few coppers they pick up here and there from odd jobs. I have seen in Canton great heavy carts loaded high with cans bearing the "Socony" (Standard Oil Co. of New York) label, being pulled through the streets by gangs of men, women, and children, evidently families, starved-looking, gaunt and exhausted, straining with all their might at the ropes—and earning an average of 15 cents each for twelve hours' labour, to the greater profit of Standard Oil.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It made me understand more clearly why Rockefeller prizes his Chinese business, and why capitalists everywhere are determined that the "Bolshevik" trade unions of China must be destroyed.

The clerks, in stores, shops, and tea houses, form another large group. In Canton about 35,000 are organised in the trade unions. There are still traces in Canton of the semi-slave, semi-feudal conditions under which this class works still in most places in China. The unions have, however, abolished many of the worst abuses, such as corporal punishment, unlimited hours, &c. Gradually order and system is being brought even into the lives of these miserable shop clerks. In Canton, after a long strike, the hours of clerks in the big department stores was limited to ten per day. In the small stores hours are still thirteen to sixteen per day.

Woman and child labour is even more exploited than that of men. Generally their wages are from 30 per cent. to 60 per cent. of that of men. Besides ordinary coolie labour, they are found principally in the small factories (matches, hosiery, silk, food preparation, &c.). There are 16,000 women members in the trade unions of Canton, which the union leaders claim is 80 per cent. of the women workers. The hosiery workers are 100 per cent. organised, the match factories 70 per cent. Women and children have relatively made the greatest gains from trade union organisation.

Hygienic conditions are indescribably bad. That is, of course, true for the entire population, including employers, for sanitation in a modern sense is only in its beginnings. Only in the modern industries, the Government plants and big department stores is there a beginning of sanitation and hygiene. These also have dispensaries with modern medical attendance for the workers.

Conditions in the Interior

The conditions described above are in Canton, a great city, the most modern in China, except Shanghai and Hankow, where the trade unions have been able to work openly for several years. What, then, must the conditions be in the interior? We had an opportunity to see at first-hand when we began our overland trip to Hankow, which lasted twenty-five days. A few typical towns along the route will give a picture of the general conditions.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Namyung is the last town on the Pei Kiang, or North River, northern Kwangtung Province, near the Tayu mountains bordering Kiangsi Province. It is reached by boat, drawn by ropes and pushed by poles against the current for six days from Shiuchow, the present terminus of the railroad eventually to continue to Hankow. The men and women who perform this labour are strongly organised in the Water Transport Union (originally for seamen only), and their union controls all transport on this river. They are, therefore, among the better-off; they receive 40 to 60 cents a day, working from dawn until dark, and sometimes till ten o'clock at night, stopping twenty minutes twice during the day for food.

Arrived in Namyung, we were lodged as the guests of the city in the public gardens on top of the great old city walls which in former times protected the commerce that flowed here from the north through Meiling Pass from Kiangsi. These walls, typical of Chinese cities, are still in good repair, but in the era of modern artillery useless for anything more serious than lodgings for guests. In the quaint tea houses perched over the city we met a dozen trade union leaders who spent hours with us answering our interminable questions.

Here we learned a peculiarity of most Chinese inland towns: a sort of rough division of labour has, in the course of time, developed between them, so that one town makes a speciality of one line of business, another town of another line, so that almost in each town will be found one industry predominating over the others. Namyung is a tobacco town, a market centre for the tobacco raised in a large district, where it is dried, packed, and shipped to the big cities to be made into cigarettes.

These tobacco packers and shippers in Namyung number 1,300, of whom 500 are women. Their work is seasonal, lasting only six months in the year. How they live for the other six months we could not learn, but when they have work they spend fourteen hours per day at it, for which they receive, for men 40 cents, for women 20 cents. The secretary of the union came to us directly from work, and therefore did not show up until after ten o'clock at night. He would begin again next morning at daybreak. He told us that the struggle with the employers at the moment was to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

force them to pay the 40 cents and 20 cents per day in silver instead of depreciated coppers.

Clerks in Namyung are all paid by the year. Apprentices get only "food and lodgings," the fourth year they begin at $20 per year. From that point they slowly progress upward. When we insisted upon knowing what was the very highest wage being paid to any clerk in town, we were told $150 per year. The hours are daybreak until 11 p.m.

Artisans, upon completing apprenticeship, begin to receive wages at $4 per month. The average wage is $8 per month, with "food and lodgings"; the hours are fifteen per day.

From Namyung we walked over the mountains by Meiling Pass to Nananfu, a distance of 120 Chinese li (about forty miles). Throughout this distance we constantly passed groups of carriers, loaded with great bundles, bales and boxes, transporting the commerce between two great provinces exactly as it had been done for the past two thousand years. Only the character of the commodities has begun to change—again I saw oil cans bearing the "Socony" label. The carriers are about equally men and women. We were told that they earn 30 cents per day, but could get no detailed information.

Nananfu was the first town we had visited in the newly-conquered Nationalist territory. It was the first point in Kiangsi entered by the Nationalist armies last July when they began their triumphant march northward. Here we heard the story repeated from that time on up to the Yangtsekiang; following the Nationalist Armies had come a surge of trade-union organisation, and struggles to ameliorate the terrible conditions of labour. Everywhere it was the same tale of feverish organisational activities, strikes, and a few meagre gains which, however, had tremendous significance for the workers. Above all, they realised for the first time the power of organisation, for the first time they "had something to say" about the course of events. This was the enfranchisement of the Chinese masses, the greatest product of the revolution so far.

The trade unions of Nananfu had about 2,500 members in the city, and 13,000 in the district. The special industry of the town is bamboo and timber, the next in importance being tailoring. The

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bamboo and timber workers, engaged in felling and transporting raw materials, not in fabricating commodities, work unlimited hours on piece work. They earn $1 per day on the average ; we could not get a satisfactory explanation why these workers can get so much more than the average wage of their district, more than twice as much as the general wage. Tailors, formerly paid 25 cents per day for fourteen hours, have cut the hours to ten and raised the wage to 28 cents, with increase of food. The shop clerks seemed to have made the greatest proportionate gains ; formerly, apprentices began without wages, and worked up to a maximum of $60 per year ; after several strikes, they now begin as apprentices at $10 first year, $20 second year, $30 third year. When we arrived, 20 per cent. of the clerks were obtaining more than $100 per year, 50 per cent. received from $60 to $100, while only 30 per cent. were getting less than $60, which was formerly the maximum.

Farther down the river, 150 miles, is the city of Changshu. A smaller city, but with about the same social and economic conditions, only here the Right Wing Kuomintang held power and oppressed the trade unions. Wages were about the same, having been raised by strikes to an average of $7 per month (daily rates from 10 cents to 60 cents, varied not according to occupations but to length of service, &c.). The " speciality " of this town is the preparation of drugs, and the Pharmacists' Union has 400 members, out of a total union membership in the city of 3,000.

In Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi Province, the reaction of Chiang Kai-shek was rampant. Trade union leaders were in hiding, and their headquarters were guarded by soldiers of a " Left " Army to prevent their destruction by soldiers of the official garrison. Wages and working conditions were the worst we had seen. The artisans were receiving 10 to 15 cents per day ; the hosiery industry, employing a large number of women, was paying 15 cents per day *without food* ; 40 per cent. of all workers were unemployed.

At Hankow, Headquarters of Nationalist Government

Hankow is the capital of Nationalist China. It is the industrial and commercial centre of China, having the most modern industry and developed working class of any city except

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Shanghai, which is in many respects a foreign city. As might be expected, therefore, the labour movement here is the most highly developed. There are 300,000 trade union members in the Wuhan cities (Hankow, Wuchang, and Hanyang) which make up one economic centre, separated only by rivers, and which we usually mean when we speak of Hankow. Properly, the collective name is Wuhan. In order to have a definite idea of the conditions of these 300,000 workers, it is necessary to examine in detail a few separate groups. For this purpose I have chosen the textile workers, as representing those workers most thoroughly brought under the conditions of modern machine production ; and the rickshaw and cart coolies, who are the least directly influenced by modern methods in their work. These two groups may be taken as the two extremes of the working class in Wuhan. Conditions of artisans here are much the same as elsewhere.

The rickshaw and cart coolies are very thoroughly organised. There are 29,900 members of the Union ; of these, 17,000 are public rickshaw pullers, the others being : private rickshaws, 3,000 ; carters, 5,000 ; carriages, 800 ; automobiles, 600 ; lorries, 1,700 ; bicycles, 400 ; car repairers, 700 ; car manufacturers, 700.

The basic group are the public rickshaw pullers, whose earnings set the standard upon which other coolie wages are set. The secretary of the Union informed me that an extensive investigation by the Union (since the Union raised fares) has shown average gross earnings by these men of 2,000 cash (the large copper coin is 20 cash, therefore 100 coppers, which were worth at that time 160 to the Chinese dollar). Out of this, the man must pay rent for the rickshaw, licence, tax, and " squeeze " for one or two middlemen, totalling 1,100 cash (equals 55 coppers). He has left as his net earnings, on the average, 45 coppers, or 900 cash, which are worth 28 cents Chinese silver (equals 28 kopecks Russian, 14 cents American, or sevenpence English). Out of this he must support himself and family. As a result, their living conditions are unspeakably miserable and vile.

The Textile Workers' Union of Wuhan has 37,096 members, these figures being taken from the membership fee records, which all pass through one office. They are organised in eleven branches ;

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

six branches represent as many cotton spinning mills, one branch to each mill ; one branch for a weaving mill ; two branches for two silk weaving mills ; and two branches of artisans working in scattered small shops, one of dye workers and the other of hosiery workers. The number of artisans amounts to 7,500.

These workers are strongly organised and highly disciplined. They are fully conscious of their power, and are studying the industry with a view to taking over direction of production. They say they know production cannot be increased under present private exploitation, but they are sure they could increase production and improve conditions, while at same time cheapening cloth. They are moving slowly, as they themselves expressed it, in order not to embarrass the Nationalist Government, which as yet hesitates before the nationalisation of the mills.

Some General Observations

Wages and working conditions are distinctly better in Canton where the unions have been at work for some years. Yet even here, only a beginning has been made toward a living wage. In the newly conquered territory, improvement is being rapidly made, wages having been increased 30 per cent. to 50 per cent. in the course of half a year, still, however, leaving Canton in the lead. In the territory controlled by Chiang Kai-shek, the trade unions are being crushed, and much of these gains wiped out. It yet remains to be seen how long this condition can last.

One specifically revolutionary feature of the trade union development is the taking over of buildings for union administration. Thus, in Canton, we visited the railway union headquarters, and found it housed in a splendid building with gardens, formerly the private residence for the chief engineer, provided at the expense of the railway. When Chiang Kai-shek's lieutenant, Li Chi-sen, carried out his counter-revolutionary *coup d'état*, he was compelled to install another group of workers there when he crushed the union ; although this other group were corrupted tools, yet it is a tribute to the depth of the revolution that even these traitors are forced to pay formal adherence to the principles of the trade union movement and the rights of the workers. In all cities, the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trade unions are gradually, but surely, taking over buildings more commensurate with their own importance.

A beginning, small as yet, is being made in the introduction of representatives of the trade unions in administrative bodies in industry. This has already been done on the railroads running out of Hankow.

Everywhere the working class is beginning to develop its own armed forces, under the name of Trade Union Pickets. The work done by these pickets in taking Shanghai before the entrance of Chiang Kai-shek's troops, is well known. Not so well known, however, is the fact that the same kind of bodies are growing up everywhere with startling rapidity. This is one of the great guarantees for future progress.

Steadily, and with increasing momentum, the Chinese working class is consolidating its power. As it does so it is improving its wages and working conditions. But already it fully realises that this task includes another one—namely, the complete reorganisation of the economic life of China. For the Chinese workers it is no longer a debatable question as to whether China shall be developed as a capitalist country, or whether it shall now proceed upon the road to socialism. It is the latter path upon which they have firmly set their feet. And already, in spite of their terrible obstacles, their poverty and misery, they have made progress that puts to shame the workers of technically more advanced countries, who, misled by the traitors of social-democracy, hesitate before their historic tasks, while the Chinese workers press forward with a tenacity, a courage, a determination, that win for them the admiration of conscious workers all over the world.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE MOST URGENT TASKS OF OUR MOVEMENT

By N. LENIN

(From "Iskra," No. 1, December, 1900)

RUSSIAN Social Democracy has repeatedly declared that the immediate political task of a Russian Labour Party must be the overthrow of absolutism and the conquest of political freedom. That was declared more than fifteen years ago by the representatives of the Russian Social Democracy, by the members of the group "Liberation of Labour," that was declared also, two and a-half years ago, by the representatives of the Russian Social Democratic organisations, who in the spring of 1898 founded the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. But, notwithstanding these repeated declarations, the question of the political tasks of Social Democracy in Russia, is now again appearing on the programme. Many representatives of our movement are expressing their doubts about the correctness of the above-mentioned solution of the question. It is asserted that predominant significance must be attached to the economic struggle, the political tasks of the proletariat are pushed into the background and narrowed and restricted ; it is even held that talk of the foundation of an independent Labour Party in Russia means simply a mechanical repetition of foreign words, that the workers have only to carry on their economic struggle and should leave politics to the intellectuals in alliance with the liberals.

This last declaration of the new "creed" (the famous *credo*) leads straight to the point where the Russian proletariat is recognised as not yet of age and the Social Democratic programme completely diverted. The *Rabochaya Mysl* ("Workers' Thoughts") has in fact expressed itself in this sense, especially in its supplement. Russian Social Democracy is passing through a period of vacillation, a period of hesitation which borders on self-abnegation. On the one hand, the Labour movement is separated from Socialism ; the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

workers are helped to carry on their economic struggle but precautions are taken not to explain to them the socialist aims and the political tasks of the movement in its entirety. On the other hand, Socialism is detached from the Labour movement ; the Russian Socialists are beginning to assert more and more frequently that the intellectuals alone by their own strength have to carry on the fight against the government, for the workers will restrict themselves only to the economic struggle.

In our opinion, three circumstances have created the soil for these unfortunate phenomena. Firstly, the Russian Social Democrats in the beginning of their activities restricted themselves in the circles purely to propaganda work. When we then proceeded to carry on agitation among the masses, we could not always avoid the other extreme. Secondly, we had to hold our own in the beginning of our activities, in our frequent fights with the representatives of the *Narodnaya Volya* (" The Will of the People ") who understood " politics " to be an activity far removed from any working-class movement, who degraded politics to the level of conspiracy. The Social Democrats who rejected such politics fell into the other extreme and pushed politics altogether into the background. Thirdly, the Social Democrats who were working separately in small local workers' circles, did not sufficiently realise the necessity of the organisation of a revolutionary party, which would co-ordinate and unite the total activities of the local groups and make possible correct organisation of the revolutionary work. The predominance of separate, sectional work is naturally bound up with the predominance of the economic struggle.

All these above-mentioned circumstances have led to the over estimation of one side of the movement. The " economic " school (as far as it can be called a school at all) has produced attempts to raise this narrowness to the height of a special theory and attempts to make use for this purpose of the now fashionable Bernsteinism, the newly-arisen *Critique of Marxism* which permits the old train of bourgeois thought to sail under a new flag. It was these attempts that have created the danger of weakening the connection of the Russian Labour Movement with Russian Social Democracy as the champion of political freedom. Our most urgent task now lies in the strengthening of this connection.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Social Democracy is the union of the working class with Socialism. Its task is not to render passive service to the labour movement in all its stages, but to represent the interests of the entire movement, to chalk out the ultimate aim and the political task of this movement, to maintain its political and ideological independence. Detached from Social Democracy, the Labour Movement is bound to give way to trifles and become bourgeois. If the working class carries on only the economic struggle, then it loses its political independence and becomes the appendage of the other parties, then it abandons the great maxim: "The emancipation of the workers must be the task of the workers themselves." There was a period in every country when the Labour Movement and Socialism existed independently of each other and travelled along separate routes, and in all countries this separation led to the weakening of both Socialism and of the Labour Movement. In all countries, it was the union of Socialism with the Labour Movement that first created a firm foundation for the one as well as for the other. But in every country this union of Socialism with the Labour Movement took place historically, passed through definite channels according to place and time. In Russia, the necessity of a union of Socialism with the Labour Movement was theoretically proclaimed long ago, but it is only now that it is being carried into practice. The process of this work is a difficult one and we should not wonder if it is accompanied by various vacillations and hesitations.

What lesson can we learn from the past?

The entire history of Russian Socialism has proved that the fight against the Tsarist government and the conquest of political freedom is its immediate task; our socialist movement has, so to say, concentrated itself on the fight against Absolutism. On the other hand, history has shown that in Russia, the alienation of socialist thought from the advanced representatives of the working class is much greater than in other countries, and with such an alienation the Russian revolutionary movement is condemned to impotence. From this naturally arises the task which the Russian Social Democracy is destined to fulfil, namely to plant socialist ideas and socialist self-consciousness among the masses of the proletariat and to organise a revolutionary Party which is indissolubly connected with the elemental Labour Movement. Much has already

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been done in this respect by Russian Social Democracy but much more remains still to be done.

With the growth of the movement, the field of work of Social Democracy becomes ever wider, the work more and more many-sided, more and more participators in the movement concentrate their forces on the realisation of various special tasks as they arise out of the daily necessities of propaganda and agitation. This phenomenon is thoroughly justifiable and inevitable, but it compels us to take especial care that the special tasks and the various methods of the struggle are not raised to an end in themselves and that the preliminary work is not proclaimed as the chief and only work.

Our chief and fundamental work consists in the furtherance of the political development and of the political organisation of the working class. All those who push this task into the background, who do not subordinate to it all the special tasks and separate methods of struggle, enter upon a false path and inflict serious injury upon the movement. That is done, however, firstly by those who appeal to revolutionaries to take up the fight against the Government with the strength of individual groups of conspirators who are totally alien to the Labour Movement ; secondly, by those who, limit the content and progress of political propaganda, agitation and organisation, who hold it to be possible and suitable to entertain the workers with " politics " only in exceptional moments of their lives, only on solemn occasions, who in their great anxiety abandon the political struggle against Absolutism in exchange for the demand for individual concessions from Absolutism, and who do not take sufficient care to see, that this demand for individual concessions is raised to a systematic and clearly-aimed struggle of the revolutionary party against Absolutism.

" Organise yourselves," the paper *Rabochaya Mysl* calls to the workers in various tones, and all the adherents of the "economic" school repeat the cry. Naturally, we too rally to this call, but we must add something more ; organise yourselves not only into associations for mutual aid, strike funds, workers' circles, but organise yourselves also into a political party, organise yourselves for a determined fight against the absolutist government and against every capitalist form of society. Without such an organisation, the proletariat is unable to raise itself rapidly to a conscious

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

class-struggle, without such an organisation the Labour Movement is condemned to impotence. Merely through strike committees, circles and relief-societies, the working class can never succeed in fulfilling its great historical task, namely to emancipate itself and the entire Russian people from political and economic slavery. No class in history ever succeeded in coming to power without selecting its political leaders and its representatives who are able to organise and lead the movement. The Russian working class has already known that it is capable of singling out such men : the extensive struggle of the Russian workers in the last five or six years has shown what an enormous reserve of revolutionary force lies latent in the working class, has shown that the most frantic persecution by the Government does not decrease but, on the contrary, increases the number of workers who rally to the banner of Socialism, political consciousness, and political struggle. At the Party meeting of our comrades in the year 1898 the task was correctly realised, foreign words were not repeated, expression was not given merely to the strivings of the " Intellectuals."

We must proceed determinedly to the fulfilment of these tasks, we must place the question of the programme, the organisation and the tactics of the Party on the agenda. We have already said what we consider to be the fundamentals of our programme, and this is not the place to develop these principles in detail. We propose to devote a series of articles in subsequent issues to the questions of organisation. That remains one of our weakest points. In this respect, we have remained very backward in comparison with the old fighters of the Russian revolutionary movement. This short-coming must be plainly admitted and we must do all we can to bring about a more conspirative leadership of the movement and a systematic propagation of the principles of work and of methods of hoodwinking the gendarmes and slipping through the meshes of the police net-work. We must train up men who will devote not only their free evenings but their whole life to the cause of the Revolution ; we must create an organisation so large that a strict division of labour can be carried through for our different kinds of work.

Finally, on questions of tactics we will limit ourselves here to the following : Social Democracy does not tie its hands, does

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not limit its activities to any pre-arranged plan, to one single method of political struggle, it sanctions every means of fight, provided only that they correspond to the existing forces of the Party and allow the possibility of attaining the maximum results that are achievable under the prevailing circumstances. In a well organised Party, a single strike can transform itself into a political demonstration, into a political victory over the government. In a firmly organised Party, an uprising in any one locality can grow into a victorious revolution. We should not forget that the fights against the government for separate demands, for wresting from it individual concessions, signify merely small skirmishes with the enemy, merely shots fired by the advance guard—the decisive encounter has still to take place. We have before us in all its power the stronghold of the enemy, from which shells and bullets rain down upon us, snatching away our best fighters from us. We must storm this fortress, and we will storm it, if only we can unite all the forces of the awakening proletariat with the forces of the Russian revolutionaries into a single Party which will attract to itself all the living and sincere elements existing in Russia. And only then will the great prophecy of the Russian worker-revolutionist, Peter Alexiev, be fulfilled: "The million-headed working population will raise its horny hands and the yoke of despotism that is protected by the bayonets of the soldiers will be reduced to the dust."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CAPITALISM AND THE NOVEL

By MANUEL LOPEZ

WHEN in 1917 the Russian workers overthrew the political power of the capitalists they did so not only to gain access to the material means of production, *i.e.*, factories, lands, &c., but to break down the barriers that had kept them from the thorough assimilation and enjoyment of the fruits of human culture, science, philosophy, and art. The cultural monopoly of the capitalists followed its economic monopoly to the scrap-heap of history. The world-shaking event of October is to be the beginning of a new world for the workers wherein will be fashioned on the anvil of Soviet power, not only a just and harmonious social order but corresponding to it and its reflection, a new culture of the masses, self-conscious, realist, collectivist. The energising example of our Russian comrades has given a gigantic impetus to the workers' cultural movement in all parts of Europe, although by far the greater part of the activities of those engaged in it is given to the propagation of the principles of Marxism, proletarian science. Yet in increasing numbers we are greeted with the publication and production of workers' plays, the publication of proletarian and "Communist" novels, &c.

It is always taken for granted that workers' novels and plays should deal with the lives and experiences of the workers who are so often shown as heroes in the fell clutch of circumstances, with heads bloody but unbowed. In Jack London's *The Iron Heel* what have we but a precursor of Ethel Dell's strong, but far from silent, hero in Ernest Everhard? Ernest Hunter's *The Road the Men Came Home* could still be a best-seller if its propagandist parts were cut out. Its hero, apart from his Socialism (I.L.P. sentimentalist Christian kind), would be a fit companion for the Sheik in the hearts of tired business men and love-lorn spinsters.

The movement can sustain the imprisonment of its leaders, the persecution of its rank and file, but that its novelists should sit at the feet of Ethel Dell and Hutchinson, that is too much.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From the proletarian, strong and virtuous and silent heroes; from the cruel and blood-thirsty and voracious villain (the capitalist); from the tender and virtuous and lingering sister of the Women's Sections, may God deliver us. Yet its coming is inevitable. As the weak sections of the movement fall under the sway of capitalist ideas so will the aspiring artists of the proletariat copy the false romanticism, the lack of style, the shallow psychology of the great mass of bourgeois literature. And so much the easier is it for them to do this as long as the principles of Marxism are not applied to the various phases of cultural activities to show the relations existing between them and the economic foundations of society.

Bukharin, in his *Historical Materialism*, has pointed out that art has a social function, "it is a systematisation of feelings in forms; the direct function of art is socialising, transferring and disseminating these feelings in society." What conditions the development of art? He gives the answer: "directly or indirectly, art is ultimately determined in various ways by the economic structure and the stage of social technology." Or as Marx puts it: "the method of producing the material livelihood determines the social, political, and *intellectual* life process in general." Hence it is possible to trace in the development of philosophy, religion, art in all its aspects, music, architecture, drama, the novel, &c., the influence of social development.

When the Bolsheviks overthrew the capitalist system in Russia they also delivered the death-blow to an entire ideological system embracing systems of philosophy, religions, code of morals, an official and stultified science and a reactionary and decadent art. Clara Zetkin, in a speech made at the seventh meeting of the enlarged E.C.C.I., drew attention to the necessity of examining not only the economic and political aspects of capitalism, but also its ideological super-structure if we would obtain an exact picture of capitalist disintegration, that shows in religion, education, the Press, science, &c., the unmistaka le symptoms of decay and early collapse. The economic system of capitalist production is in its death throes, and this is reflected in accordance with the M.C.H., with the ever-spreading disintegration and decay of the whole cultural life of our time. "The supporting pillars and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

columns of the capitalist super-structure are beginning to shake and totter—they are crumbling; glowing streams of lava and hot ashes are devastating and destroying the erstwhile blooming gardens of bourgeois ideology, of the bourgeois world conception."

Trotsky, in his *Literature and Revolution*, devotes part of his work to an estimation of the social significance of pre-revolutionary art which is characterised as the art of the "hangers-on"; an art which has revealed its indissoluble connection with the governing class of old Russia. When the landlords and capitalists fled to the shelter of the White Armies across the frontiers in 1917 they took with them their domestic flunkeys, their mistresses, their panders, and their poets and scribblers. A nauseating compound of cynicism, pessimism, philandering, servility, and cowardice, this exiled art rots in the capitals of Europe, and these attributes of pre-and non-revolutionary Russian art are to be found in the art of all countries—the counter-revolutionary characteristics of capitalism's culture. Capitalism does not rest only upon bayonets, but also on the masses' allegiance to bourgeois ideology, of which art is the most subtle and the most insidious factor.

"The great question of social salvation is so great and sublime that all other problems which time may bear in its folds must wait in silence. The whole of old Europe is waiting with bated breath for the fulfilling of things which are coming. . . . History stands still, because she gathers force for a great catastrophe." Thus wrote the old Dietzgen in 1875. And yet to-day there is not a single English writer of eminence who has grasped this elementary principle of social science or who has any conception of the true purpose of the modern working-class movement. Lack of a rational and scientific understanding of social development (Marxism), a deeply-rooted pessimism as to the ability of the proletariat to transform society, the class affiliations (education, social status, source of income, &c.) of the modern artists, are the fundamental causes of the spiritual bankruptcy of English literature and of its counter-revolutionary rôle.

Faithfully enough a few may depict the corruption of the Press, of Parliament, &c.; satirise the narrow-minded prejudices, the greed and philistinism, of the bourgeois; the stupidity and licentiousness of the rich; but a realisation of these things as

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

symptoms of a fundamental decay in capitalist economy is completely absent. Thus the one-sided realism which is characteristic of the works of Galsworthy, Bennett, Wells, Forster, &c. Tchekov stated: "You confuse two things: solving a problem and stating it correctly. It is only the second that is obligatory for the artist." It would be something if the artists did this, but they do not. Theirs is the philosophy of Jack London when he wrote, "But I know better than to give the truth as I have seen it in my books. The bubbles of illusion, the pap of pretty lies, are the true stuff of stories." If stating problems correctly lies beyond the literary ability and knowledge of English writers, solving them appears to be their strong line. Thus in Galsworthy's *The Silver Spoon* we have Foggartism as a cure for social and economic ills, and in Wells' *The World of William Clissold* we have the Blue Train as a means of flight from the Red Menace. Both methods would excite the mirth of the newest member of a Plebs class, although the latter work found favourable reviews in all the journals of reformist Labour.

The attitude of the novelist towards the worker is one of conscious and stupid superiority. The proletariat in modern writings are all "Yus-Sayers." Hear Bichet speak in Galsworthy's *The White Monkey*:—

> I see it is, from your fyce. I want the truth—I must 'ave it. I'm getting wild over all this. If that's 'er fyce there, then that's 'er body in the gallery; it's the syme nyme.

This is Mr. Bojanus from Aldous Huxley's *Antic Hay*. It is obvious he belongs to the "people."

> For the 'uman 'erd is an 'erd which can't do without a leader. Sheep, for example: I never noticed that they 'ad a leader; nor rooks. Bees, on the other 'and, I take it, 'ave. Natural history was never, as you might say, my forty.

It is harder to find an intelligent worker in modern novels than it is to find an honest person on the Stock Exchange. And this is a symptom of the fact that modern novelists hold the working-class movement in contempt, consider its actions as stupid anti-social manifestations of ignorant envy and malicious destructiveness, and are permeated with the deepest pessimism as to the ability of the workers to reconstruct society. The characteristic principle of bourgeois thought and culture is individualism,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which is fundamental alike in its economy as in its art. Trotsky writes: " . . . bourgeois society during the period of its rise had a great aim for itself. Personal emancipation was its name. . . . In reality all modern literature has been nothing but an enlargement of this theme." Modern literature has torn the individual apart from society and through the cults of the " New Psychology," " The Unconscious," " The Subconscious," " Sex Complexes," &c., has explored human individualism to the dregs and has finished in the slough of pessimism, scepticism, and spiritualistic bankruptcy.

It is said that the modern writer is a disillusioned pessimist exploring the limits of cynicism with the doctrine of the right of every soul to find its own damnation. Norman Douglas says: " Consider well your neighbours, what imbeciles they are "; in place of the word " neighbours " we recommend the substitution of the word 'authors." Cabell, with his philosophy of the vanity of desires achieved and his picture of man as " an ape bereft of his tail and grown rusty at climbing "; D. H. Lawrence, with his credo, " My soul is a dark forest. Strange gods come forth from the forest into the clearing of my known self and then go back "; Aldous Huxley, whose hero in *Those Barren Leaves* feels within him the need for unperturbed and untrammelled meditation; and the whole sweep of those who so faithfully reflect the perversions of sexual love in modern society; where in these can the worker find reflected the dynamics of a great age of social change, the inspiration to gigantic class battles, the elaboration of those slogans which they need—political, imperative and intolerant? To quote Trotsky, in conclusion, the worker needs an art " against mysticism, against the passive deification of nature, against aristocratic and every other kind of laziness, against dreaminess and against lachrymosity—and for technique, for organisation, for planfulness, for will power and courage, for speed and precision. An art realistic, active, vitally collectivist and filled with a limitless creative faith in the future."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World of Labour

ANGLO-RUSSIAN UNITY

ON June 22 the General Council of the T.U.C. decided not to call a meeting of the Anglo-Russian Advisory Council. This was the culminating point of recent negotiations between the two bodies, and, unless rank-and-file pressure is able to move the British General Council, is likely to be the end of official unity between the English and the Russian Trade Unions.

From its inception up to May, 1926, the Committee carried on its work in spite of the hostility of the capitalist Press and of the I.F.T.U. The I.F.T.U rebuked the General Council, and in 1925 was so incensed by " the peculiar form of radicalism which has so suddenly developed among the British Trade Unions " as to attack leaders personally. *Vorwarts* and other organs of Continental reformism wrote of the English Trade Unions as " the agents of Russian foreign policy." But it was not until May of last year that any real test of the strength of the Committee was experienced. Previously, it is true, the initiative for any move had invariably been taken by the Russians. Grave misgivings had been caused by delay after delay. But the mining crisis in England proved the real testing time. During the general strike the Russians offered financial aid to their comrades in England. This, too, was turned down by the British T.U.C. The Russians were thereafter presented with two courses of action : (1) to keep silent on the General Council's treatment of Anglo-Russian unity and the working-class struggle in England ; or (2) to speak out their minds to the workers of Britain, even at the risk of offending the General Council. They chose the latter course, which resulted in a policy of sabotage on the part of the General Council against the Anglo-Russian Committee.

During the coal stoppage, the Russians asked for a joint meeting in order to discuss how best to help the miners. At length a joint meeting was held in Paris on July 30-31. At this meeting the British asked for a cessation of criticism. The Russians insisted that the miners' lock-out was the main issue to be dealt with. The British delegates, however, rejected this, and the meeting finally adjourned with nothing definite having been achieved. On account of the indecisive character of this meeting a further meeting was held in August at Berlin. The Russian proposals for assisting the British miners were rejected by the British, but the Committee decided to urge the General Council of the British T.U.C. to

> fulfil the obligation undertaken by the Anglo-Russian Conference and afterwards ratified by the General Council and the British T.U.C., namely, to call a preliminary conference without any restrictive conditions, between the I.F.T.U. and the Russian unions,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and recommended the British General Council to summon the conference not later than the end of October. On the eve of the Bournemouth Congress at the beginning of September the British General Council decided to postpone the matter for three months.

Then came Bournemouth, and when the Home Secretary forbade the attendance of Russian fraternal delegates, *The Times* could justly speak of secret relief on the part of the British General Council. The fraternal message sent in place of the delegates, its reception, the ways in which it was replied to, and the universal praise accorded to the T.U.C. by the capitalist papers marked the growing difference.

The next meeting of the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council took place in April, 1927. Three resolutions were adopted embodying the four following clauses:—

> (1) The Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council unanimously reaffirms the sincere desire and readiness of the Trade Union Movements of both countries to do everything in their power to create by their joint effort the unity of the International Trade Union Movement.
>
> (2) The A.R.J.A.C. further declares that the essential condition for success in the struggle for the international unity of Labour against Capital is a firm fraternal union between the Trade Union Movements of Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. It testifies its readiness to develop systematically and strengthen the existing friendly relations between those movements.
>
> (3) This development should be in the direction of more active mutual aid and support, based on the unconditional recognition of the principle that the sole representative and medium of expression of the Trade Union Movement of Great Britain is the British Trades Union Congress and its General Council, while in the U.S.S.R. the corresponding bodies are the Trade Union Congress and the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions.
>
> (4) The A.R.J.A.C., speaking in the name of the Trade Unions of both countries, representing nearly fifteen million organised British and Russian workers, appeals again to the organised workers of every country to join their efforts with the British and Russian Trade Union movements in order to prevent new fratricidal wars, to defend their standards of living and political rights, and, overcoming all obstacles and difficulties, to help to bring into existence one all-inclusive world-wide Federation of Trade Unions.

Just how much these resolutions really meant to the British General Council is shown by the following resolution that they placed on the agenda of the Paris Congress of the I.F.T.U.:—

> This Congress expresses its profound regret at the continued separation of national Trade Union centres from the I.F.T.U. Bearing in mind the interdependence of the working class in all countries, it hereby appoints a committee of four members to investigate the cause of the inadequate manner in which the Federation is organised, and to make such recommendations as will eventually lead to an increase in the number of affiliated bodies, in order that the Federation may become an organisation of universal scope and influence.

That was the first test of the April resolutions. The second test came when the Arcos Raid and the diplomatic rupture with Russia indicated an intensification of the capitalist offensive and an approach to war upon Soviet Russia. On May 14, the Russian Central Council of Labour Unions sent the following telegram to the General Council:—

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The latest events sustain the worst fears with regard to the preparation of an attack of the imperialists under the leadership of Great Britain against the Soviet Union. The raid upon the Pekin Embassy of the Soviet Union and the arrest and torturing of its employees was, as is now clear, not only inspired by but a part of the plan for an offensive against the Soviet Union. The raid upon Arcos and upon the Trade Delegation, which was accompanied by violence against the employees, is the second act, the direct continuation of the offensive which commenced with the Pekin raid.

The Central Council believes the moment to be serious and demanding the exercise of all the forces of the working class in order to oppose this dangerous policy. The Central Council is of the opinion that it is necessary to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee in order to consider joint action on the part of the Trade Union Movements of the two countries. If you do not consider this possible at the moment, then the Central Council will not press for it, on the assumption that the General Council realises the importance of the situation and will fulfil its fraternal duty and protest energetically enough against the policy of raids and an offensive against the Soviet Union.

The answer to this was as follows:—

Your telegram will be discussed by the General Council in its session next week. A protest has already been sent to the Prime Minister.

It was dated May 18, and on the 25th, a week later and the day following the formal diplomatic rupture, the Central Council sent another request for an answer. The British reply to this was a letter dated the 29th (four days later). It ran:—

We hereby corroborate our telegram dispatched to you yesterday with the following text: "We cannot convene the Anglo-Russian Committee; we will, however, inform you as quickly as possible in the matter."

When several more days had elapsed, the Russians, on June 3, 1927, sent the following letter to the General Council:—

On May 14 the Central Council directed a request by telegram to the General Council to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee on account of the open intention of the British Conservative Government to break off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. . . .

The Central Council regards the situation as serious, for the intention of the Conservatives to force war on the Soviet Union is clear to everyone.

At the present moment the Anglo-Russian Committee has an extremely responsible rôle. The workers of the Soviet Union want to know what the Anglo-Russian Committee intends to do in the fight against the approaching war and in case it breaks out. The Central Council is of the opinion that not only the workers of the Soviet Union, but also the workers of other countries, expect activity from the Anglo-Russian Committee, as every war brings with it the danger that it may develop into a world-wide war. The whole world is threatened with this danger. Procrastination and passivity are damaging and can lead to disastrous results.

The Central Council is of the opinion that any such procrastination and passivity would cause justified dissatisfaction amongst the working masses, who regard the Anglo-Russian Committee as an organisation which has been created to fight against the offensive of capitalism and against the danger of imperialist wars. For this reason the Central Council requests a speedy communication from the General Council informing it whether or not the General Council is in agreement with the calling together of the Anglo-Russian Committee.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> Should the General Council be in agreement, then we request a communication concerning the date and the place of the meeting.

On June 10 the Russians, being still without answer, sent the following telegram to the General Council:—

> Despite the extremely tense situation you have given no clear answer to our repeated request to convene a session of the Anglo-Russian Committee. Our affiliated organisations are inquiring as to the reason for the passivity of the Anglo-Russian Committee. This forces us, unless we receive a definite answer by the 14th of this month, to publish the correspondence between us on the subject.

This telegram succeeded in securing an answer, and the General Council replied the same day as follows:—

> In reply to your letter of June 3 the International Committee of the General Council proposes that Tomsky and Dogadov meet Hicks and Citrine on June 17 and 18 for the purpose of a preliminary examination of those questions which you wish to lay before the Anglo-Russian Committee. Please telegraph whether date satisfactory.

The next communication was a telegram, sent by the Russians the following day, June 11:—

> We have no objection to the preliminary conversations between the chairmen and the secretaries upon the agenda, but we must insist in the name of our organisations categorically that on the date mentioned all the members of the Anglo-Russian Committee meet in Berlin and hold a plenary session. Events are moving swiftly, and every form of delay is impermissible. We expect an immediate answer; should no answer arrive we shall take it that the General Council is in agreement with our proposal, and all the Russian members of the Anglo-Russian Committee will then arrive in Berlin on the 17th inst.

In answer to this Citrine dispatched the following to Melnichansky on June 12:—

> I cannot arrange a plenary session of the Auglo-Russian Committee without the instructions of the General Council, which will meet on the 22nd inst. In consequence the full Committee cannot be in Berlin as requested on June 17. I request you therefore to telegraph immediately if you wish the chairman and myself to be in Berlin on the 17th inst.

The Russian trade unionists immediately notified their acceptance, and on June 17 Hicks and Citrine met Tomsky and Melnichansky in Berlin. On June 20 there was a meeting of the General Council, which received their representatives' report. After discussing the report of the Berlin meeting and the whole question of the relations of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, it was decided to refer to the International Committee the drafting of a reply to the Russian demand for a full meeting of the Advisory Council, *this draft to be submitted to the next full meeting of the General Council.* As the General Council was not to meet until the middle of July, it was clear that this postponement put the Anglo-Russian Committee out of action for the most critical period. It began to be believed that the intention of at any rate a section of the General Council was to shelve this matter until the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On June 29, at the Extraordinary Plenary Session of the Russian Unions, a declaration was made from which we take the following:—

Declaration Addressed to the Workers of the Soviet Union and of Great Britain

The dangerous international situation, the ever more threatening danger of war and the vicious attack of capitalism in Great Britain have up to the present produced no decisive action upon the part of the Anglo-Russian Committee. The Anglo-Russian Committee, however, was formed to fight against the offensive of capitalism, against the danger of imperialist war, and for the international unity of the Trade Union Movement. The attempt of the Central Council of the Labour Unions of the Soviet Union to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee in Berlin in June was met by the General Council of the T.U.C. with evasions, postponements, and sabotage. Therefore the Central Council of the Labour Unions of the Soviet Union considers it its duty to direct the following declaration to the workers of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union.

The Central Council believed and still believes that the Anglo-Russian Committee which was formed as the organised expression of the struggle of the working-class movement in Great Britain and the Soviet Union against the offensive of capitalism, against the danger of imperialist war, and for the international unity of the Trade Union Movement, could and should meet to consider the existing situation and to fling its whole authority into the scales for the protection of peace and against the preparations being made for war. In such a moment silence and inactivity on the part of the Anglo-Russian Committee would be a crime in the eyes of the working class. This is our firm conviction.

The British General Council is attempting to evade the convening of the Anglo-Russian Committee and is causing delays under various excuses. It systematically avoids placing the most important questions which interest the British and the Russian workers before the Anglo-Russian Committee for examination. The Central Council cannot conceal the fact from the workers of Great Britain and the Soviet Union that the obstinate refusal of the British General Council to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee can only be interpreted as a deliberate policy towards the breaking up of the Anglo-Russian Committee which justifies the fears of the Seventh Trade Union Congress of the Soviet Union.

The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee is an organisation representing the Labour Union Movements in both countries. The very fact of the existence of such an organisation consolidated the bonds of friendship between the proletariat of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union. The formation of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee was a decided forward step upon the way to international proletarian unity. . . .

Holding the dissolution of the Anglo-Russian Committee to be damaging to the struggle for the international unity of the working class, the Central Council considers the present open or masked disruption of the Anglo-Russian Committee by the leaders of the General Council to be direct treachery to the class interests of the proletariat of the Soviet Union and of Great Britain.

The only political answer made by the General Council to the proposal of the Central Council to call the Anglo-Russian Committee and discuss the important questions was contained in the telegram of protest in connection

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the reprisals of the proletarian State against the White Guardist spies who had drawn the sword of terror against the proletarian dictatorship. The resolution of protest adopted by the General Council condemning the shooting of open and obstinate enemies of the working class, the shooting of incendiaries and terrorists who shot down from behind representatives of the workers' State, who were actively engaged in preparations for the restoration of the regime hated by the workers and peasants, was in effect a direct mockery of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union and a shameful participation on the part of the leaders of the General Council in the campaign against the Soviet Union made by the venal bourgeois Press.

To ignore the danger of war, to conceal the real significance of the Anglo-Russian breach from the workers, not to condemn publicly the foreign policy of Chamberlain, to evade the convening of the Anglo-Russian Committee and at the same time to make common cause with the Black Hundreds in the question of the so-called " Red Terror," that is the real policy of the General Council. Such tactics cannot be regarded as anything but treacherous and aiming at the dissolution of the Anglo-Russian Committee.

In the name of ten million organised workers in the Soviet Union the Central Council considers it its duty to announce publicly the dangers which are threatening the world. Only the blind can fail to see that Great Britain is arming for a war against the Soviet Union, coming to an understanding with the Fascist Mussolini, mobilising the dark forces, recruiting allies, seeking to bring about a repetition of the horrors of the intervention, of the blockade of the free workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, striving to burden the Workers' State with new confusion and suffering. Only a traitor to the cause of the proletariat could justify such a policy in face of the growing danger of war.

The carrying out of the terrible plan to crush the Chinese revolution and to commence a campaign of blood against the Soviet Union must be prevented at all costs! The struggle against war is the urgent duty of the British and the world proletariat.

The Central Council repeats, it considers it impermissible for the Anglo-Russian Committee to be silent, to be passive, in such a situation. The Anglo-Russian Committee can and must raise its voice against the danger of war and against the reaction. The Anglo-Russian Committee must become a central point for the mobilisation of proletarian public opinion; it must place the question of the practical measures to adopt in the struggle against imperialist war and against the offensive of capital on the agenda. The Central Council places the full responsibility for the policy of sabotage towards the Anglo-Russian Committee upon the shoulders of the General Council and appeals to the British and Russian workers to fight energetically for real proletarian solidarity, for a real struggle against capitalism, for a real defence against the incendiaries who seek to cause an imperialist war.

A proletarian front against the front of capitalism!
Fight against imperialist reaction!
Proletarians, prepare yourselves for the struggle against the danger of war!

On this statement the General Council made no comment : but one of its most prominent members, Mr. J. H. Thomas, at the annual delegate meeting of the National Union of Railwaymen in the first week of July took the opportunity to voice his indignation at "interference" in British Trade Union affairs by Soviet Trade Unionists.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOK REVIEW

CLASS COLLABORATION IN AMERICA

Industrial Relations in the United States. By H. B. Butler, C.B. (International Labour Office, Geneva, 1927.)

THIS is a study of the feature in American industrial life that is most envied by European (and particularly by British) capitalists, and, therefore, is being most fervently praised by those leaders of the Labour Movement whose function it is to advocate whatever changes in the organisation of capitalism are most needed at the moment, for its progressive development and expansion (or, as in Britain at present, seem to hold out the best hopes for its recovery).

The International Labour Office is a responsible organisation set up to do its best to smooth out the difficulties arising in the present system of society. Like one of the more responsible newspapers—say the London *Times*—it is most useful to those whom it is intended to serve when it gives a relatively objective viewpoint on important subjects. The book before us, therefore, is not a propagandist attempt to show how ideal are the conditions governing industrial employment in America (such as, for example, *The Secret of High Wages*, by Bertram Austin, M.A., and W. Francis Lloyd, M.A.) and it is even free, to a remarkable extent, from the judicious use of colouring matter observable in the Government Delegation *Report on Industrial Relations in the U.S.A. and Canada* (1927, Cmd. 2833) signed without comment by Messrs. Bevin and Kaylor.

The conclusions reached are put down as tentative. There is no attempt to describe the new tendencies as forming a process occurring throughout the whole of American industry ; they are described as tendencies not yet certain to survive or to spread widely. The last paragraph of the book, referring to " experiments in collaboration between capital and labour " points out that " the enterprises in which such experiments are being tried are as yet comparatively small in number."

An attempt is made in the first chapter to provide a general background for the study of industrial relations in the United States, by dealing lightly with the geographical feature of size, with the extremely diversified legal position in the various States, the mixture of races due to immigration, and with what is held to be the keynote of American industry : Individualism.

The second chapter is devoted to a review of the economic conditions under which the " new tendencies towards collaboration " have begun to flourish. American prosperity, the rise in real wages since the war period, the increase in productivity per man and the effect of high wages on the purchasing power of the people are dealt with ; but the treatment of the whole of this question of American prosperity is extremely (and admittedly) superficial.

In the final chapter (page 106), the reasons for American prosperity are summarised as being to some extent " derived from the special advantages which the United States enjoys in its great home market, its immense natural

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

resources, its abundance of capital and in its population, which is still far short of the country's capacity."

Taking these alleged reasons for prosperity one by one would lead us beyond the issues arising out of this book, but one very simple fact practically invalidates all of them: American prosperity dates roughly from 1919. Before that date, wage levels were, if anything, only slightly above the average British level of the pre-war years (the difference in the cost of living being taken into account) and real wages were practically stationary from the beginning of the century up to somewhere about the middle of 1919. (Mr. Butler notes in the book under review, on page 35, that real wages fell slightly between 1900 and 1910).

The fact that the "American economic miracle" consists not in a continually increasing high level of wages, but in a fairly sharp rise in wage levels after the war period (to something like 30 per cent. above pre-war) is admitted by Mr. Butler on page 30.

America's size has not altered since 1918. The population has grown normally, and in spite of the wage increase the home market derived from wages—taking Mr. Butler's figures collected from the Statistical Abstract, 1925, page 748—scarcely absorbs 1.5 per cent. more of the value of the products of American industry than was the case before the war.

America's "immense natural resources" are also somewhat beside the point, when considering this post-war period of prosperity and relatively high wages. The resources existed before the war; and, also, other countries possessing comparable resources (e.g., India) are not held out to us as examples of prosperity.

Mr. Butler's impression, expounded at length, that the rise in wages was due to the shortage of labour is made ridiculous when we look at the unemployment figures: there were four to five million unemployed in 1921 (when real wage rates were rising sharply) and have been two to three million on the average since then. (See 1927, Cmd. 2833.)

The real reason for America's prosperity during the last seven or eight years, and for the high level of wages which has prevailed even during periods of unemployment and depression, such as 1921, is to be found in the change from America as an economic colony of European capital to America as the leading imperialist power in the world. The United States are going through a period of imperialist prosperity greater than that of Britain during most of the nineteenth century, and more concentrated and rapid in its effects, but comparable to it in many ways.

The main portion of the book before us is not, of course, devoted to this question of prosperity, high wages and the reasons for them. These questions are, however, very important because they are the theoretical basis both for modern plans of capitalist reorganisation throughout Europe, as exemplified by the "rationalisation" of German industry, and for the I.L.P. plans for "Socialism in our Time." In all I.L.P. publications expounding these plans, America's prosperity is taken as both practical and theoretical justification for their possibility and value.

The present state of industrial relations in America corresponding to this "prosperity" is defined by Mr. Butler as "a transitional stage . . . in

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which the creed of combat is being challenged by a new doctrine of co-operation which has found considerable support both among employers and workers." The practical working out of this doctrine of co-operation is analysed in the chapters on trade union policy, the policy of the employers and their associations, on the new science known as "personnel management" and on the schemes for "employee representation."

It is pointed out that the American trade union movement contains only a very small proportion of the working class, the American Federation of Labour having only 2,800,000 paying members in 1926 and the unions outside the Federation not numbering more than about 1,000,000 members. The unions therefore consist of the skilled and higher paid workers who have received most of the benefit secured by the working class from the present phase of prosperity.

Almost all these unions are very definitely willing to co-operate with the employers in the smooth running and expansion of industry, so long as a certain status is given to the unions' representatives and they are allowed to have some say in questions affecting their members directly. In spite of this, a very vigorous attack has been carried out by the employers against all trade unionism during the years since the war. The campaign for "the open shop" has not yet ended. Mr. Butler notes this attack on the unions as one of the reasons for their very heavy fall in membership.

Mr. Butler is doubtful of the usefulness and permanence of the plans for "employee representation" which are definitely aimed at excluding the trade unions, and, therefore, at weakening them. He gives, in an appendix, many details of the plans which he considers more likely to serve useful purposes: those which absorb the trade union machinery and, in fact, reproduce very largely the general lines of the British Whitley Council experiments. He considers that the firms adopting these plans "represent the advance guard of American industry."

His final conclusion is:—

> If the American pioneers can confirm and extend their success in bringing about real partnership between employers and workers, their example will ultimately spread to the whole mass, with the result that the United States will have secured a further guarantee of supreme importance for the maintenance of its material prosperity and for the progress of its social welfare. . . . . It may be that the present experiments in the direction of a better industrial order will prove to be barren. If so, they are bound to be succeeded by others which will take account of the reasons for their failure, for the problem which they are seeking to solve is one that cannot be shelved or shirked, if industrial civilisation is to be preserved and developed.

It is possible, however, that industrial civilisation will be developed on completely different lines from those foreseen by Mr. Butler. Indeed, even now, any further development in America or elsewhere along the lines advocated by Mr. Butler is dependent upon factors—such as the peace of an Imperialist World—which, to any unprejudiced eye, have obviously weakened since Mr. Butler wrote this book, and as every Marxist knows, are not likely, for long, to continue in existence.

T. H. W.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Martin Lawrence
ANNOUNCES

THAT the following books from his Autumn List will be *READY* on *SEPTEMBER* 12th

*KARL MARX: MAN, THINKER AND REVOLUTIONIST. A remarkable symposium edited by D. RYAZANOFF, Director of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow. *Cloth*, 6s.

*THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS. Russia's leading Economist, N. BUKHARIN, deals devastatingly with the theory of 'Marginal Utility.' *Cloth*, 7/6.

*KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS. A fascinating study by D. RYAZANOFF of the famous lifelong collaboration. *Cloth*, 7/6.

Twenty Six Bedford Row, London, W.C.1

FINDING THE "EVIDENCE"

Whenever the Government of any country have required "evidence" for an offensive against Soviet Russia they have always managed to "find" it. In Bulgaria, in China, in America, in Britain they are always singularly fortunate.

The "Zinoviev letter" is fresh in our memory. To-morrow may produce another.

How it is done is shown in

"ANTI-SOVIET FORGERIES"

160 pages. 36 illustrations.
Foreword by GEORGE LANSBURY, M.P.

Price 1/-, post free 1/3. Quantities 10/- per dozen, post free.

WORKERS' PUBLICATIONS Limited, 254 Gray's Inn Road, W.C. 1

SELLING RAPIDLY

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EXPERIENCE

Experience, knowledge, well-chosen plant, light airy buildings, good organisation and dispatch service, all contribute to the production of two dozen or so weekly and monthly journals, turned out in their millions of copies by us.

ADD YOURS, AND SECURE REAL SERVICE

In your first communication to us please mention "The Labour Monthly."

LONDON

Caledonian Press Ltd.

TRADE UNION IN ALL DEPARTMENTS

W. FRANCIS MOSS, *Managing Director*

74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
London, W.C. 1

Telegrams: Edcalopres, Kincros, London
Telephone: Museum 1311
Museum 7777

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 *Buckingham*
Palace Road
*S.W.*1,
and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
*W.C.*1
W 15214

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED